



No 3,709

THE INDEPENDENT

SATURDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 1998



(1R80p) 70p

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EURO 2000



THE MAGAZINE

SEX, DRUGS AND POCKET MONEY
WHAT IT MEANS TO BE 16



WEEKEND REVIEW



UNCOOL FOR CATS
WAR DOWN ON THE
FELINE FARM

Showdown on the farm

Clinton grovels to save his job

BILL CLINTON was facing the biggest test of his two-term presidency last night, with both supporters and opponents now speaking openly in Washington about the prospect that the eight-month scandal over his relationship with Monica Lewinsky could finally force him from office.

Even as he wound up his visit to Ireland last night, Mr Clinton's political fortunes appeared to be in meltdown as commentators and fellow politicians digested the shock of a

blistering attack in the US Senate by Senator Joseph Lieberman. While Mr Lieberman stopped short of demanding impeachment or any immediate sanction of the President, he voiced his deep disappointment following the admission by Mr Clinton on television on 17 August that he had indeed had an affair with the White House intern, Ms Lewinsky, after denying it for months.

Although the Dublin visit had been carefully choreographed to highlight his contribution to the peace effort in Ireland, Mr Clinton found himself forced into trying to draw the sting from Mr Lieberman's attack by once more apologising for the relationship with Ms Lewinsky.

For the first time, the President said he was "sorry" for his actions and again, "very sorry". His sputterings, made during an appearance before photographers alongside the Irish Prime Minister, Bertie Ahern, after denying it for months,

reinforced the impression that whatever the President does he cannot escape the rapidly tightening pincers of the scandal. And all of this is happening before the special prosecutor in the case, Kenneth Starr, has even submitted his report to Congress that may or may not provide grounds for impeachment. The report should reach Congress by the end of this month.

"Clinton finds himself like a character in a horror movie, trapped alone in a room with the walls closing in," remarked

Allan Lichtman, a political scientist at the American University in Washington. "He needs another Houdini-like escape". "I think it's the beginning of the end," said a leading Democratic consultant. "Lieberman opened the way for many Democrats to express their anger, which will only grow after the mid-term elections." Those elections, which could end in defeat for Democrats on Capitol Hill, are set for early November.

In his rebuke, Senator Lieberman declared: "The transgres-

sions the President has admitted to are too consequential for us to walk away and leave the impression for our children and our posterity that what President Clinton acknowledges he did within the White House is acceptable behaviour for our nation's leader". That behaviour, he added, had been "disgraceful".

In his reply yesterday, Mr Clinton virtually grovelled to the cameras. It was an image that was played over and over again on television screens in the US. "I made a bad mistake," he

President said. It's indefensible and I'm sorry about it".

The worry for the White House, which once again finds itself on political high-alert, is that more damaging details of the liaison may still be to come. The New York Post reported yesterday that one of Mr Clinton's sexual encounters with Ms Lewinsky occurred on Easter Sunday two years ago - just four days after death of his friend Ron Brown, the former US commerce secretary, in a plane crash in Croatia.

"The roof is caving in on Clinton inside Washington DC," remarked Democratic consultant Jennifer Laszlo, adding however, that the rafters remained strong in the rest of the country. There is a distinct danger, however, that popular support may crumble if people begin to perceive that the only way for the scandal to go away is for Mr Clinton to go away first.

Simon Fein talks, page 4
Clinton swamped, page 12
Leading article, Review, page 3

Blair faces pressure to act on job losses

THE GOVERNMENT was under growing pressure last night for a change of economic strategy after the closure of a Japanese-owned semiconductor factory in Tony Blair's constituency with the loss of 600 jobs.

Labour MPs joined trade unions, the Tories and the Liberal Democrats in demanding that ministers prevent further job losses this autumn by acting to curb Britain's high interest rates and strong pound to help companies weather the worldwide economic storm.

But Mr Blair ruled out any change of course and ministers are bracing themselves for criticism of their handling of the economy at the annual TUC and Labour Party conferences later this month.

With fears that unemployment could rise by up to 500,000, union leaders and Labour activists will accuse the Government of adopting a policy which allows the jobless queue to lengthen so that its 2.5 per cent inflation target can be hit. But ministers will argue that allowing inflation to rise would put many more jobs at risk.

The Government is trying to prevent further job losses in South Wales, where Ron Davies, the Welsh Secretary, is seeking assurances that Korean-owned LG will go ahead with a £1.2bn

electronics plant, the biggest inward investment project in Britain. There are fears because of a planned merger with rival Hyundai.

The Prime Minister insisted that the closure of the Fujitsu plant at Newton Aycliffe in his Sedgefield constituency was due entirely to the collapse of the world market for semiconductors.

The Prime Minister was "very saddened" by the job losses. "It is a blow not just for the employees and their families but for the entire local community."

The loss of the plant, which will close in December, is an embarrassing setback for Mr Blair and for Peter Mandelson, the Trade and Industry Secretary, who represents the neighbouring seat of Hartlepool.

Just days after Mr Mandelson moved to the Department of Industry in July, Siemens announced the closure of its Tyne-side semi-conductor factory with the loss of 1,100 jobs.

William Hague, the Tory leader, said the Government was making the world economic downturn worse rather than helping British companies weather the storm.



Tubby bells hide Mike Oldfield as his rave TBIII premieres last night at Horse Guards Parade. Andrew Bushman

Eh-oh... it's time for Tubby bye-byes



TOUGH negotiations are under way at the BBC to decide the fate of the world-famous Teletubby characters. Although, to the average viewer, Tinky Winky, Dipsy, Laa Laa and Po look healthy enough, the harsh reality is that they may have only months to live.

The contract between the BBC and Anne Wood, who created the four characters, specified that Ms Wood's company Ragdoll would make 260 Teletubby programmes. But filming

BY JANE ROBBINS

Media Correspondent

will finish at the end of next week causing consternation on the set, and among BBC executives, fearful for one of their biggest money-spinners.

Ms Wood has said that she would like to make 365 programmes. That means only 103 more programmes and imminent death for the series. However, the BBC is urging her to change her mind.

The corporation last year sold Teletubby goods, from T-shirts to toasters, worth £23 million, and it would now like a new "continuous contract". Signs are, though, that Ms Wood is not persuaded.

BBC insiders say she is still reluctant to sign up to make 365 programmes a long lifespan. It seems that she has no wish to see the four brightly-coloured, big-bottomed characters endure a long, miserable old age.

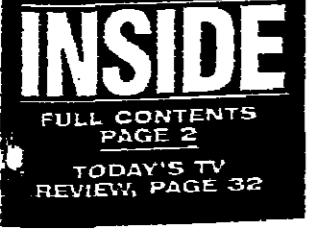
She does not wish the pro-

gramme to look tired, and has always taken a hands-on approach to quality control, right down to insisting on filming in authentic Teletubbyland conditions, insisting on the open air, rather than closed sets.

The details of the new contract will be settled soon - and Ragdoll confirms that it is prepared to sign up for more programmes next year, but after that "we will take it from there". The BBC said it retains hopes for a three-year deal.

Should the Teletubbies be sent to teleheaven by Ms Wood, the BBC will see the end of a first magnificent era in merchandise sales. It has sold 160 licences to make teletubby toys. Teletubby videos have brought in £10m, merchandise £4m and music cassettes £2.5m.

Ms Wood has also made a fortune. City brokers reckon she will make about £50 million in the next two years from UK and international sales and merchandising.



PAGE 3

PAGE 8

PAGE 13

PAGE 16

PAGE 23

3.6

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INDEX**HOME NEWS**

PAGES 2 - 11

Smoking linked to cot deaths

One in four cot death babies is found to have high levels of nicotine in the body, scientists have discovered. It is the first firm link to parental smoking. Page 9

Autumn book season begins

Suddenly it's party time for the publishing industry and the media as books are given an alcohol-assisted launch on an unsuspecting world. Page 11

FOREIGN NEWS

PAGES 12 - 15

Unicef wells poison the water

Tubewells installed by Unicef in Bangladesh are producing water tainted with arsenic that is causing thousands of cancer cases. Page 15

The marketing of Dachau

The town of Dachau, site of the first Nazi concentration camp, has called in the marketing experts in an attempt to rebrand itself. Page 14

BUSINESS NEWS

PAGES 16 - 18

Western banks shed thousands

Foreign-owned banks are cutting thousands of jobs in Russia, as the crisis there begins to bite. Page 16

SPORTS NEWS

PAGES 19 - 32

Rose misses fifth cut in a row

Justin Rose, a national hero in the Open two months ago, missed his fifth straight cut as a professional golfer at the European Masters in Switzerland. Page 23

WEEKEND REVIEW

32-PAGE BROADSHEET SECTION

Fergal Keane

"I can remember a priest moving in to separate couples whose embrace became too passionate." Page 3

| | | | |
|---------------------|-------|--------------|-------|
| Letters | 2 | Books | 14-17 |
| Leaders and comment | 3-7 | Gardening | 13-19 |
| Monitor | 4 | Country | 20 |
| Obituaries | 10-11 | Travel | 21-27 |
| Faith & Reason | 11 | Miscellany | 29 |
| Arts | 12-13 | Radio and TV | 30-32 |

Cryptic crossword, Main section, page 32



Recycled paper made up 46.03% of the raw material for UK newspapers in 1997

TOMORROW IN**THE INDEPENDENT
ON SUNDAY**

The Party Boys
Rachel Sylvester tells the inside story of Waheed Alli and Charlie Parsons, the young, gay, 'youth TV' tycoons at the heart of the New Labour establishment

Every wife has one ...

The truth about women and their mothers-in-law

Girls on film

Can they loosen the male grip on Hollywood?

Swissair crash: Search for survivors abandoned as airline boss defends safety record

Aircraft had faulty history

CANADIAN authorities gave up the search for survivors from the Nova Scotia aircraft crash yesterday, as grieving relatives arrived to mourn the dead.

In Geneva yesterday, Swissair acknowledged that the US Federal Aviation Administration had issued a directive in June 1997 about a wiring problem in the cockpit of the MD-11 aircraft which could cause a fire and make it difficult to pilot the craft. US airlines were told to fix the problem, but it was optional for foreign carriers.

Philippe Brugger, chief of Swissair's parent company, said the airline had made the necessary changes before the directive was issued.

The Swissair flight from

BY ANDREW MARSHALL
in Peggy's Cove

New York to Geneva plunged into the sea after reporting smoke in the cockpit late on Wednesday. All 229 passengers and crew were killed. No cause for the tragedy had been discovered, and investigators were refusing to speculate.

Until yesterday morning the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, which led the search, had maintained that it might still find survivors. But 36 hours after the crash, it said that the main purpose of the flotilla stationed off the coast was to find wreckage and discover the cause of the disaster, as well as salvage bodies.

More than 100 relatives and helpers were expected to arrive yesterday afternoon from Geneva, and dozens more had already flown up from New York. Swissair paid \$20,000 (£33,000) to those bereaved families who requested it, and arranged travel and hotel arrangements. A secluded area was set up at the lonely, rocky cove near where the aircraft came down, from which they could see the crash site.

The grim task of collecting bodies continued, hampered by harsher seas and the dispersal of the wreckage. A hundred Canadian soldiers were searching the coast and islands, making grim discoveries.

"Partial body parts and

human remains are washing ashore," a Mountie told reporters at Peggy's Cove. Some 60 bodies had already been found, though officials said it was very hard to estimate how many people that represented.

Police said that they were disturbed to discover that unofficial divers and boats had arrived in the area, apparently private individuals curious about the accident. They said that any sightseers in the search zone could be arrested. Tensions also grew between the media and the police, with the Mounties threatening to act against any reporters who tried to get unauthorised access to grieving relatives.

US military divers joined

the Canadian armed forces and police to search for wreckage and for the aircraft's black box flight recorders. A Canadian submarine was also briefly deployed, but officials said they had not detected any signals from the boxes. Police were testing debris to see if there was any evidence of explosives, but they said that the bodies displayed no burning, indicating that the aircraft broke up when it hit the water at a shallow angle and did not explode.

■ A Royal Airlines plane en route from Toronto to Glasgow made an unscheduled landing yesterday after the pilot smelled fumes. The Boeing 737 with 225 people on board was near a Canadian Forces Base when the pilot radioed that he would have to land.

The dead included many eminent figures, many with

Relatives grieve for six Britons who died

BY KATE WATSON-SMITH

AS THE main wreckage of the Swissair flight which crashed in the Atlantic off the Canadian coast killing all 229 on board was being inspected yesterday, relatives of the six Britons on the plane spoke of their shock and grief.

The Foreign Office named the Britons as Olivier Jackman, Heidi Kretschmer, Keith Abery, Stephanie Shaw, Norman Scouler and Joyce Ratnavale.

The sister-in-law of Mrs Ratnavale, 74, the former United Nations employee who was killed with her Sri-Lankan husband Victor, said she was devastated.

Monica Dollery said Mr Ratnavale, 77, had just had a successful heart-by-pass and colon surgery during their stay in America.

"It had all gone very well. They were looking forward to getting home to Geneva where they were very well liked," she said.

The couple had been visiting their daughter Chantal, a doctor, and her family in Virginia. The couple chose to stay in Geneva, where they first met, after retiring from the UN. They had a son, Myron, who also lives in Geneva, and an



Norman Scouler (above) from Manchester, died along with former French teacher Joyce Ratnavale, of Kent, and her husband Victor

other daughter, Amanda, who lives in France. "They had so many friends in Geneva who like me will be devastated," Mrs Dollery said. Mrs Ratnavale, a former French teacher from Kent, worked as a personal secretary at the World Health Organisation. Her brother Lt Col Lionel Dollery, a former Conservative mayor, from Gillingham, died of cancer only four months ago.

Norman Scouler, 45, originally from Bramhall, Greater Manchester, was returning from a business trip in Massachusetts to his home in Geneva.

The divorced father-of-three was the chief executive of an electrical firm, Sylvania Lighting International. His deputy Roger McSweeney, said he had spoken to him minutes before he boarded the flight.

"He was at the peak of his career. A man of prodigious en-

ergy and a man of great warmth and charisma," he said. "He rang me from the airport that evening but he had to break off the conversation because he was called to board the ill-fated flight.

"He was his normal effervescent self and we were due to get together on Sunday evening in Brussels. I have lost a great boss and a great friend."

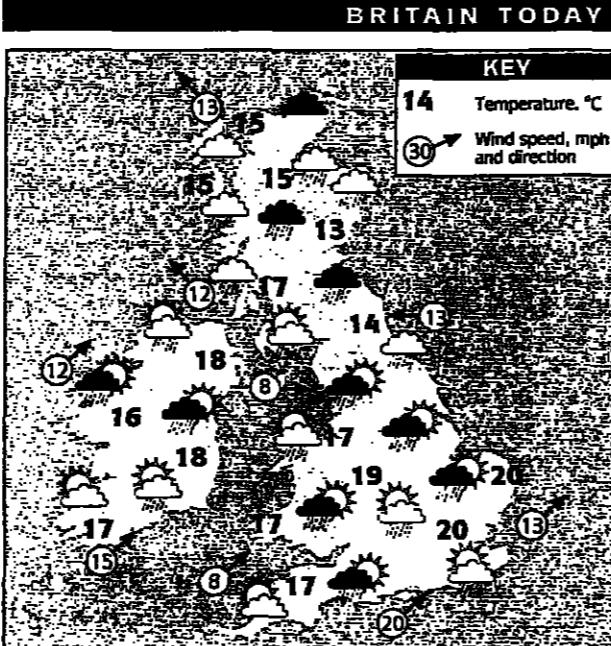
Mr Scouler, a keen golfer, had

an 18-year-old son and two daughters in their 20s. He had lived in Geneva for five years.

Other passengers who died in the crash also included Dr Jonathan Mann, a pioneer in the fight against Aids and his wife, Mary-Lou Clements-Mann, a professor at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Pierce Gerey, director of African Great Lakes operations at the UN High Commission for Refugees, Yves de

Roussan, a UNICEF regional adviser and Dr Roger Williams, a recognised expert in the field of cardiovascular genetics.

Among those presumed dead, whose name appeared on a passenger list, was a member of the Saudi royal family, Prince Bandar Bin Saud Bin Saad Abdul Rahman al-Saud, according to the Saudi diplomatic mission in Geneva. The former Saudi air force pilot was 42.



SW Wales, Channel Is, S Wales: Light rain and bright spells. Wind: Light south-westerly. Max temp 18-20°C (64-68°F).

NW Scotland, N Isles: Some sun but clouding over with rain spreading northwards. Moderate easterly winds. Max temp 16-18°C (61-64°F).

NW Scotland, Aberdeen, N Isles: Overcast with occasional drizzle and patchy mist. Scatter rain spreading northwards. Last a moderate east to south-easterly wind. Max temp 15-18°C (59-64°F).

Edinburgh, Glasgow: Rain easing as it brightens. Sunny spells and scattered downpours. Wind: Light south-easterly wind veering south-westerly. Max temp 17-20°C (61-68°F).

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The world's fattest nations are those with biggest bottom lines

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

FATTIES ARE taking over the globe. In every country in the developed world, waistlines are expanding. As prosperity grows, so do bottoms and, with some exceptions, a rough guide to national income can be obtained from the average dress or trouser size.

In Europe, obesity has increased by 10 to 40 per cent in most countries over the past decade and similar increases have been seen in the United States, Australia and the Far East. Figures presented at the International Congress on Obesity in Paris this week demonstrate that obesity is a global epidemic.

However, as the league table of the fattest and thinnest nations shows, the proportion of the population who are obese varies widely across the globe from the diminutive Chinese to the bulky Samoans. Obesity is not merely a reflection of the calories on the plate. It is influenced by genes, culture, physical activity and social attitudes.

In Britain, 15 per cent of men and 16.5 per cent of women are classified as obese, more than twice the proportion in 1980 when the equivalent figures were 6 per cent of men and 8 per cent of women. More than one-third of women and almost half of men are considered overweight. Yet, as a nation, we are eating no more than we did two decades ago. The expanding British waistline is linked to the decline in physical activity. More cars and video recorders have meant more slab.

In a global context, the British come somewhere in the middle of the bulk rankings. The two main contributors to obesity are a sedentary lifestyle and a high fat diet and both are linked to prosperity.

Later this month, Britain's first slimming clinic will be able to try a new anti-obesity pill which works by compelling those who take it to stick to a low fat diet.

Xenical, which will be avail-

MUESLI, SKIING AND HEALTH: WHY SWedes STAY SLIM

WITHIN EUROPE, Sweden ranks as the slimmest nation, thanks to muesli, skiing and a belief in physical prowess—reflected in the popularity of its sports clubs, which boast among the highest membership in Europe. In Germany, sausages and *Sachertorte* combined with a commitment to *Vorsprung durch Technik* has made the more prosperous nation also the weightiest.

In China, a largely rural lifestyle which makes heavy

physical demands combined with a low-fat, rice-based diet keeps the population trim. In the US, where people commute to offices in air-conditioned cars and only break sweat when the pizza delivery is late, average seat sizes have increased.

Cultural factors play their part. In Samoa and neighbouring islands in the Pacific, obesity has long been regarded as a symbol of high status and prosperity and is seen as

attractive as a result. In recent years, there have been signs that these traditional notions are changing as more Westernised ideas of an attractive body size take hold.

There are also sex differences. Women are fatter than men, a legacy of childbearing. But here, too, culture plays a part. In the United Arab Emirates, male obesity rates are similar to those in Britain but among women they are more than twice as high.

Despite the enormous international range in rates of obesity, only about 20 per cent of differences in body shape can be attributed to genes, according to Professor Garrow.

"If it were the case that the Chinese and Japanese had something in their genes that kept them thin they wouldn't become taller and fatter when they migrated to the US. But migration studies show that they do."

JEREMY LAURANCE

ernment to put its authority behind the campaign to curb obesity. Tessa Jowell, public health minister, had dropped it as a target from the Healthier Nation programme.

Professor Garrow said: "Suggesting that obesity is controllable is seen as victim blaming. It is politically incorrect, although scientifically it is correct."

Although obesity is now a global epidemic, the bigger surprise is that more people are not affected. Animal studies have shown that rats given an unlimited quantity of palatable food will continue to put on weight until the food is restricted. Humans are no different, according to Professor Garrow.

"Human beings now live to 70 or 80 when they were designed to live to 20 or 30 from subsistence agriculture where scratching a living was pretty difficult. Now that we are living to a staggering age with food available 24 hours a day it is surprising that we are not all obese."

The only reason people are not is that they are either young—because it takes time to gain weight—or that they have successfully exercised some control over their weight."

Estimates by the World Health Organisation's task force on obesity suggest that this is not mere fantasy. By 2005, there will be around 26 million obese adults in the US. On present trends, the entire population will be obese in 35 years unless Americans can be persuaded to curb their appetites.

Obesity is defined as a body mass index (BMI) over 30. BMI is a measure of thinness/fatness derived from a complex formula (weight in kilograms divided by height in metres squared).

A simpler approach, which gives a rough guide, is to take a waist measurement. If it is more than 102cm for a man (40in) or 88cm (35in) for a woman, their chances of suffering health problems associated with their weight rise sharply.

"Human beings now live to 70 or 80 when they were designed to live to 20 or 30 from subsistence agriculture where scratching a living was pretty difficult. Now that we are living to a staggering age with food available 24 hours a day it is surprising that we are not all obese."

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Ms Thomas's decision to quit follows that of the model Emma Balfour, who said earlier this year that she was going to quit the catwalk because of the prevalence of drug use and anorexia.



Sarah Thomas revealed fashion's sleazy subculture

Supermodel at thin end of the wedge

IT MAY just have been one backstage tiff too many that led the teenage supermodel Sarah Thomas to quit the catwalk, but health experts around the country have said her revelations about eating disorders will help them to treat thousands of young women more effectively.

Ms Thomas, aged 18, announced her decision to quit the catwalks of Paris, New York and Milan after an intense year of modelling which, she said, opened her eyes to a

sleazy backstage subculture of drug use, pressure dieting and eating disorders.

Instead, the British model will forego up to £6,500 a day on the foreign catwalks and return to her family in Norfolk to pick and choose her future work—a decision eased by the fact that she is currently the "face" of Cover Girl cosmetics.

The fifth 10th teenager's remarks that some designers considered her too fat—at

nine stone (57kg) she is technically borderline underweight—has alarmed both the British Dietetics Association (BDA) and the Eating Disorders Association.

Both welcomed her decision yesterday and said her stance would help them to convince other young women that the "glamour" industry is anything but.

Around 70 per cent of female teenagers diet to lose weight. Up to 2 per cent of those go on to develop the two commonest

eating disorders, anorexia and bulimia, and the figure can be up to five times higher among dancers, models and athletes, according to the BDA.

Lynne Costain, a BDA nutrition specialist, said some of the strongest pressures on young women were female body images used in advertising and the fashion industry.

She said: "It is very difficult to give good messages to those I work with in psychiatric units especially when they read that Claudia Schiffer lives on 500

calories a day. But Sarah has given us the ability to give young women real and accurate images based on experience, and it will be enormously useful in breaking down some of the misconceptions and pressures which lead teenagers down this path."

Tim Newton, spokesman for the Eating Disorders Association, said: "It's a very welcome stance that Sarah has adopted."

"It's about time the fashion world got a bit more responsi-

bility about the images it is portraying. If they want people who look ill, what kind of message is that sending out to the buying public? It is good that someone is prepared to say that they are not prepared to portray an image of illness as popular fashion."

Ms Thomas's decision to quit follows that of the model Emma Balfour, who said earlier this year that she was going to quit the catwalk because of the prevalence of drug use and anorexia.

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Northern Ireland: Peace process edges forward but fears mount over hard-line position of American fundraiser

Top loyalist backs Sinn Fein talks

REPUBLICANISM and Unionism inched yet closer to face-to-face encounters yesterday when David Ervine, leader of the Progressive Unionist Party, made it clear he was prepared to meet Sinn Fein in the new Belfast assembly.

His statement was the latest in a series of political manoeuvres towards direct contacts between representatives of the two traditions. Although there have been many meetings on round-table basis, most Unionist groupings have yet formally to sit down with Sinn Fein.

Another important step takes place on Monday when the Ulster Unionist leader, David Trimble, in his capacity as the assembly's First Minister designate, hosts talks involving all parties. This is expected to produce the first direct engagement between Mr Trimble and the Sinn Fein president, Gerry Adams.

Although the two men have often been in the same room they have not addressed each other directly. There is an expectation, at some stage soon,

BY DAVID MCKITTRICK
Ireland Correspondent

that Mr Trimble will meet as-senior party leaders on an individual basis.

The prospect of such meetings has sent frissons through some sections of Mr Trimble's assembly party, which contains individuals who are opposed to talks and, in particular, are against any prospect of Sinn Fein joining a new governing executive IRA arms decommissioning taking place.

One backbencher, Peter Weir, has said that Sinn Fein should not be allowed into an executive without the total decommissioning of weapons and disbandment of the IRA.

In spite of such pressure from the Unionist ranks, the general expectation is that contacts between republicanism and Unionism are now inevitable, especially in the light of what are viewed as concessions from Sinn Fein over the past week.

Mr Ervine's contribution yesterday is seen as adding to the air of inevitability. He said

of the new assembly: "Northern Ireland will have its parliament. In order that that parliament works effectively, there needs to be interaction among all the people within it. We'll talk to those who will talk to us on the basis of need for the delivery of services to the people of Northern Ireland."

Although his Progressive Unionist Party - which has close links with loyalist paramilitaries - is separate from Mr Trimble's Ulster Unionists, Mr Ervine has been an important supporter of the trend towards a more flexible Unionist line. The two members of his party could be arithmetically important within the assembly in the event of defections from the Trimble camp.

Those opposed to Mr Trimble appear to be tactfully refraining from making a major fuss on the issue of talks with republicans. Instead they seem to be keeping their powder dry in order to make a more determined stand against Sinn Fein's entry to the executive.

Leading article,
Review, page 3



Alastair Grant

A greenkeeper preparing the Ballybunion golf course yesterday for President Clinton's game today

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Caddy who will tell the President what to do

BY DARIUS SANAI

FOR NINE years, Michael Scanlon, 62-year-old Kerryman worked in a dispatch office in a rundown suburb of West London. Today, for four and a half hours, he will be telling the President of the United States what to do.

Mr Scanlon, chosen by Ballybunion Golf Club, in deepest Co Kerry, to be caddy to President Clinton during his round today, is delighted.

His deep blue eyes widen and a smile lifts his crimson cheeks. "It will be the greatest day of my life," he says in a soft-as-butter accent. "It is the greatest honour."

The club is one of the world's finest, stretching along two miles of dunes on the south-western tip of Ireland. The chosen man is a true professional, easily vetted by the secret service agents who popped out of every available doorway in Ballybunion yesterday.

There is some delicacy. The owner of Monica's, a seafaring shop, has covered its sign with a board, stuck a notice on renaming it (temporarily). The President's Store, and stocked up with US memorabilia.

After Russia's chill and Northern Ireland's sad determination, the leader of the free

world will likely receive the warmest welcome of his tour in this town of 3,000 souls.

"It's the most wonderful thing for us and the economy, because it will bring in the dollars," said Eileen Flanery, a 35-year-old teacher. Her son Desmond, five, clutched an American flag taller than himself.

President Clinton, an avid player, will drop in on Ballybunion for a round this afternoon after a speech to the people of Limerick. His golfing partners will be former Irish foreign minister Dick Spring, Irish finance minister Charlie McCreevy, former pro Christy O'Connor, and the club's captain, Brian McCarthy. Club committee members, when asked why the group was a fivesome, muttered darkly about being coerced into accepting a player who had not been on the original plan.

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Fundraiser who worries leaders

BY DAVID USBORNE
in New York

PRESIDENT BILL Clinton and Prime Minister Tony Blair share a new common concern about Ireland. They worry that forces are stirring in America to support the opponents of the Good Friday Agreement and to raise money for dissident Republican groups, like the Real IRA, which perpetrated the Omagh atrocity.

The focus of their anxiety is the former public relations director of Noraid, Martin Galvin, who through most of the 1980s and early 1990s successfully raised millions of dollars for the Republican cause in Ireland. He has long been a man of considerable stature amongst Irish Americans, blessed with a smooth tongue and persuasive charm. And he is openly opposed to the peace agreement.

Since mid-April, Mr Galvin, who also practices law, has been speaking his piece at rallies and in New York pubs. He has also openly allied himself with the 32 County Sovereignty Committee, reportedly the political arm of the Real IRA. Soon after the Good Friday Agreement, he ushered one of the Council's leaders, Bernadette Sands-McKevitt, the sister of the hunger striker, Bobby Sands, on a visit to Washington and New York. He visited the Council in the Republic just two weeks ago.

Galvin pronounced himself opposed to the Good Friday Agreement in spite of pressure from most of the Irish American community here to keep

US and start American cash flowing again to Ireland.

Mr Blair this week urged President Clinton to pass new legislation to block any attempts at such fund-raising in the US. Whether Mr Clinton needs to act, however, is open to question. Because Messrs Galvin and McDonagh may not have the support that London and Washington fear.

"Martin has clearly made clear how he feels about the Good Friday Agreement," commented Larry Downes, the President of Friends of Sinn Fein in New York. "But I would have to say that even among activists in New York the support for the agreement is overwhelming."

If Mr Galvin was once hopeful of building a constituency here, his standing has been all but shattered by the bomb in Omagh. It was an abomination, moreover, which for days he failed to condemn.

Tony Quinn, a barman at Rocky Sullivan's, a midtown Irish bar where political conversation flows faster than Guinness, notes that Galvin and McDonagh used to drop in together - until Omagh. They have not been seen in the place since. If anyone among Irish American activists in New York are now sympathetic with Galvin, he adds, "it would have to be a very, very small minority". London and Washington fear Galvin given his fundraising record. Send him out with a bucket to New York's Irish bars this weekend, however, and he would be lucky to raise a cent.



Martin Galvin: Staunchly against the peace accord

silent. He has the support of John McDonagh, another activist in New York, who hosts his *Radio Free Ireland* talk show here every Saturday afternoon. Last month, the pair launched an eight-page monthly *Sovereign Nation* newspaper to propagate their views.

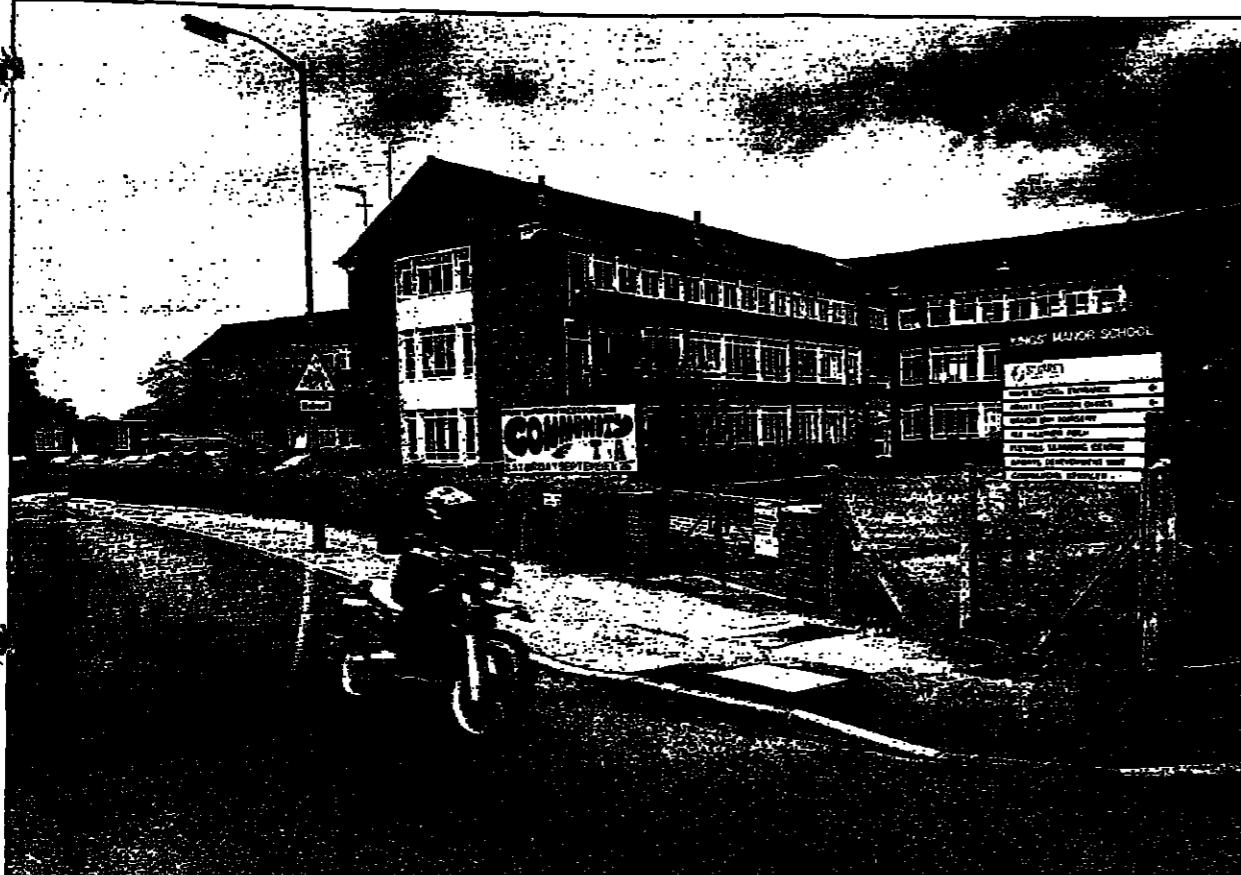
Talking to *The Independent* this week, however, Mr Galvin denied that he was raising money for the Sovereignty Committee. He also seeks to downplay the alleged link between the Committee and Real IRA. "Right now we are in an education process," he says.

Galvin and McDonagh are confident that the Good Friday Agreement will fail to deliver on its promises and that support for it among Irish Americans therefore will vanish. Their highest hopes, however, are pinned on new anti-terror laws. They say the incarceration of scores of innocent Irish will arouse sympathies in the

Sept 10 1998



Private firms bid for failing school



Kings Manor school, Guildford, could be the first to be run by a private company Philip Meech

THE FIRST contest between private firms to take over a failing secondary school is about to begin.

Councillors in Surrey will meet on Monday to discuss proposals from three companies to turn round Kings' Manor comprehensive school in Guildford.

Last night the Department for Education said that it would not rule out the idea. Ministers are encouraging companies to take part in education action zones designed to raise standards in underachieving schools.

The three companies asked by Surrey County Council officers to submit plans are the Edison Project, which runs schools for profit in the United States, Nord Anglia, the largest commercial education organisation in the UK and CIBT, a

BY JUDITH JUDD
Education Editor

non-profit making organisation that provides education services.

Councillors will be asked to decide whether the school should be closed or given a fresh start with a new head, governors and staff.

Takeover and investment by a private firm will be only one of several options on the table but Dr Andrew Povey, chair of the education committee, said that he was very interested in the idea. He pointed out that the school's numbers had fallen sharply and inspectors reported in July that measures were needed to improve behaviour, attendance and pupils' progress.

"We feel that the only way we can make a success of it is by

doing something really radical," he said.

"We are way ahead of the Government here. In reality, there is very little private sector involvement in the action zones and they are not giving the management of schools to outside parties."

If the idea of private-sector management is accepted, formal bids will be invited from companies.

Edison proposes that it would invest in the school and manage it in return for retaining excess income or a management fee.

Nord Anglia proposes a "Millennium school" specialising in information technology and business studies with a fee related to the school's performance.

CIBT would be interested in a specialist business school

with 10 per cent selection of pupils and teachers receiving performance-related pay.

Doug McArdle, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said that the school should continue to be run by the local authority. "Earlier this year, David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, committed himself to saying that education should not be run for private profit. We expect him to stick to that."

Greg Gardner, the school's head, said: "We have read about the privatisation proposals but we would expect that to be the result of a much more detailed consultation process following Monday's meeting."

A spokeswoman for the Department for Education and Employment said: "We will consider any proposals when they are presented to us."

Girls on top in GCSE leagues

BY JUDITH JUDD

GIRLS' SCHOOLS head the league tables of GCSE results for independent schools, published yesterday.

King Edward VI High School for Girls in Birmingham (fees £4,725 a year) has come top of *The Independent's* table - which ranks schools according to a new points system - with candidates achieving an average score of 78.8. The school was also second in a table that ranks schools according to the proportion of A and A* grades. Girls at St Paul's School for Girls in London came top according to this measure - 97.4 per cent of all entries gained A or A*.

The figures for 600 independent schools were provided by the Independent Schools Information Service. Alongside traditional measures such as the proportion of candidates achieving grades A*-C, the service provides a new GCSE points score that gives eight for an A* grade down to one for a G.

The point score, which will be introduced by the Government for all schools this autumn, shows achievement for all pupils and not just for those who secure the top grades.

Sarah Evans, head of King Edward VI High School, said the school's success reflected the ability of the girls and the quality of teaching. But she was scathing about league tables. "The Government's idea that league tables are in some way informing the public better is completely false.

"They diminish the work of all schools by putting in front of the public a reduction of everything education is about to a single figure. It is misleading people into thinking that schools are about producing a particular number. It's a bit like doing a league table of newspapers on the basis of how many words of three syllables they use."

The different league tables produced by using different measures of performance illustrate the difficulty of pro-

Top-scoring schools for exam performance

| School | Points per candidate | % of A* - A |
|--|----------------------|-------------|
| King Edward VI High Sch for Girls, Birmingham | 78.8 | 94.7 |
| Perse School for Girls, Cambridge | 76.39 | 82.9 |
| King Edward's School, Birmingham | 76.31 | 74.4 |
| The Abbey School, Reading | 75.6 | 73.9 |
| St Paul's School, London | 75.07 | 79.6 |
| Whitgift School, Croydon | 74.1 | 64.9 |
| Westminster School, London | 73.32 | 82.8 |
| King's College School, London | 72.05 | 74.9 |
| King Edward VI School, Southampton | 71.71 | 54.8 |
| The Lady Eleanor Holles School, Hampton | 71.25 | 82.3 |
| Dulwich College, London | 70.03 | 59.1 |
| Oxford High School GDST | 70.01 | 87.6 |
| King's School, Canterbury | 69.79 | 63.9 |
| The Haberdashers' Aske's School, Borehamwood, Hertfordshire | 69.76 | 73.5 |
| Central Newcastle High School GDST | 69.65 | 75.3 |
| Downe House, Thatcham, Berkshire | 69.64 | 74.3 |
| Wycombe Abbey School, High Wycombe | 69.53 | 90.6 |
| The North London Collegiate School | 69.3 | 86.5 |
| Manchester Grammar School | 69.28 | 75.8 |
| Wimbledon High School GDST, London | 68.72 | 65.1 |
| Canford School, Wimborne | 68.62 | 46.8 |
| The Cheltenham Ladies' College | 68.56 | 75.6 |
| James Allen's Girls' School, London | 68.55 | 77.5 |
| St Helen's School, Northwood, London | 68.52 | 71.5 |
| St Paul's Girls' School, London | 68.31 | 97.4 |
| Leeds Grammar School | 68.31 | 64.6 |
| Bolton School Girls' Div | 68.27 | 71.8 |
| Haberdashers' Aske's Sch for Girls, Borehamwood, Hertfordshire | 68.25 | 89.2 |
| Manchester High School for Girls | 68.17 | 65.5 |
| Eton College, Windsor | 68.08 | 81.1 |
| Royal Grammar School, Newcastle upon Tyne | 67.75 | 63.5 |
| St Peter's School, York | 67.71 | 64.5 |
| Nottingham High School | 67.44 | 63.1 |
| The Perse School, Cambridge | 67.43 | 66 |
| The Maynard School, Exeter | 67.41 | 67.6 |
| King's School, Chester | 67.1 | 69.8 |
| Etham College, London | 67.03 | 60.9 |
| Bolton School (Boys Div) | 66.93 | 52.7 |
| Hymers College, Hull | 66.9 | 60.8 |
| Leicester Grammar School | 66.82 | 54.7 |
| Withington Girls School, Manchester | 66.77 | 91.2 |
| Sevenoaks School | 66.58 | 75.6 |
| The Alice Ottley School, Worcester | 66.41 | 55 |
| Westbourne School, Penarth | 66.4 | 67.8 |
| Ladies College, Guernsey | 66.3 | 64.7 |
| Dean Close School, Cheltenham | 66.2 | 37.9 |
| Shrewsbury School | 66.18 | 62.3 |
| Magdalene College School, Oxford | 66.17 | 54.2 |
| City of London School | 66.15 | 60.1 |
| Wolverhampton Grammar School | 66.12 | 59.5 |

viding comparisons of schools' academic performance.

For example, the point score used by *The Independent* gives schools where pupils take more GCSEs an advantage over those which take fewer. At some of the most academic schools, such as Winchester, pupils take only about eight GCSEs each. At other schools, they take 11.

Elizabeth Diggory, the new head of St Paul's Girls, said the structure and culture of the school encouraged good learning "in the widest sense". League tables had their downside, she suggested, but they had encouraged schools to look critically at their performance.

Overall, the percentage of independent school entries

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Inward investors take the road out



Fujitsu management leaving their plant at Newton Aycliffe, which is set to shut because of a worldwide glut of computer chips John Voo

BY BARRIE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

JUST SEVEN weeks ago ministers were trumpeting the fact that a record number of inward investment projects had been lured into Britain in the Government's first year in office.

From now on they may prefer to draw less attention to Britain's increasing reliance on the decisions of foreign businessmen and its vulnerability to economic conditions overseas.

Yesterday's news from Fujitsu that it is to shut its microchip plant in County Durham with the loss of 670 jobs – and the previous announcement of the closure of the giant Siemens plant in North Tyneside with the loss of 1,100 jobs – casts doubt on the policy of attracting inward investment, possibly at the expense of encouraging home-grown businesses.

As the north-east tried to come terms with the another blow to employment, Ron Davies, Secretary of State for Wales, was seeking assurances from Korean electronics giant LG that its merger with rival Hyundai did not place a question



The Fujitsu plant was opened seven years ago

mark over its £1.2bn computer chip plant being built at Newport.

Official figures show that Britain attracts a lion's share of inward investment in Europe – more than 40 per cent of Japanese investment, nearly 40 per cent of American investment and around 50 per cent from Korea. Overseas companies now account for around two-fifths of the top 100 exporting businesses.

At the last count, foreign-owned firms in the United Kingdom made up 17 per cent of manufacturing employment; 33 per cent of manufacturing capital expenditure; 26 per cent of net manufacturing output, and some 40 per cent of UK manufacturing exports.

Blood is invariably thicker than water for these foreign-owned businesses. Firms suffering from an adverse business climate will always tend to close plants furthest from home.

And it is much easier to sack British workers. Despite the Government's plans for new rights for employees, it will still be more difficult to dispense with the services of their Continental colleagues.

On the Continent there are often more stringent rules on redundancies and on consultation with unions before plants are closed. Britain's very lack of regulation helps to attract foreign firms in the first place.

Inward investors often set up in areas of high unemployment, and therefore, calculate that it is relatively easy to secure a fresh workforce if they decided to reopen. While many of the manufacturing companies are in electronics, the vast majority of employees are low-skilled and easy to replace if business conditions improve.

Scotland and the north-east act as strong magnets to foreign executives looking for sites for new factories, although the economy of Wales seems to be the most heavily reliant on overseas companies. In all three areas, but especially in Wales, there has been a distinct lack of home-grown entrepreneurship, but a compensating talent for securing subventions from the state to shore up the regional economies.

Subsidies however mean that companies do not lose so much of their own money when they decide to close a plant. Ministers are unlikely to attempt to claw back much state money for fear of deterring future investment from abroad.

The most worrying aspect of the present problems encountered by the foreign-owned companies is that they are operating in sectors which will be critical to our industrial future.

David Blackaby, reader in economics at the University of Wales, Swansea, argues that while foreign companies proved more resilient in the last recession, the meltdown of economies in south-east Asia means they will be particularly vulnerable this time round.

Overcapacity in the semiconductor industry may be the principal factor in the decision of Fujitsu and Siemens management, but there are far darker macro-economic forces at work.

Ironically Britain may be less successful in attracting foreign companies in future. The 11 nations set to join the European Monetary Union may seem a safer bet than a country whose currency may be less stable.

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North-east fears further closures

BY BARRIE CLEMENT AND LINUS GREGORIADIS

DISTRAUGHT STAFF at Fujitsu's showpiece factory in County Durham yesterday became the latest victims of a wave of job losses hitting the North-east.

Workers at the plant spoke of their personal shock after the 670 redundancies were announced, and expressed their wider fears for the region. Northeastern England has suffered an estimated 4,000 job losses in two months and employees' leaders believe there could be more to come as a direct consequence of the strength of the pound.

While managers pointed to overcapacity in the micro-electronics industry, unions believe the Government's high interest rate policy has made it far worse.

The closure is yet another bitter irony for an area forced to abandon its old smoke-stack industries of coal, steel and shipbuilding with the consequent loss of tens of thousands of jobs. The future was said to lie in the kind of gleaming high tech Fujitsu plant which the Queen opened in 1991.

The Japanese plant, hailed as an industrial saviour, has attracted scores of young workers. But yesterday's closure announcement that comes after the loss of 1,100 jobs at Siemens in North Tyneside last month, has fuelled fears about the future of more than 50 Far East firms based in the region.

Standing outside the factory, recently voted best Fujitsu factory world-wide – Peter Middleton, a personnel worker, said: "It's a very sad and devastating piece of news for everybody. I just hope the market recovers, and there is a light at the end

of the tunnel. There are a lot of companies locally that support Siemens and Fujitsu, so there may be further job losses."

Mr Middleton, 49, is one of 670 staff at the Newton Aycliffe factory. He said: "I am out of work, the same as everyone else, with a mortgage and family. We are all contracted until 4 December, so I have got to look for another job." His son, 23, has also lost his job.

Many workers were too disappointed to speak. "I really just want to go home and have a word with my family," said one.

Many staff believed Fujitsu would go on flourishing, but others were pessimistic about the Japanese management's commitment after an £816 million extension programme was recently put on hold.

"I have always had nagging suspicions," said Stewart Livingstone, 25, who has been working at Fujitsu for 2½ years.

Fez Debona, 35, a technician and family man, originally from Maidstone in Kent, said: "Personally I thought Fujitsu was a strong contender for riding out the storm. Obviously not."

Shop stewards for 16,000 manufacturing workers in the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union in the North-east met yesterday, and urged their leadership to call for the Government to take responsibility for setting interest rates away from the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee, and bring it back under political control.

IN BRIEF

Woman jailed for 'air rage' attack

A woman who fought with cabin crew on a British Airways flight was jailed for 15 months yesterday. The airline said it was pleased with the outcome of the hearing into one of a growing number of "air rage" cases. Elizabeth Elliott, 24, was refused entry to the United States, got drunk on the return flight and went berserk, attacking cabin crew and causing mayhem. Isleworth Crown Court was told.

Private jail boss moved from post

Alan Reid, controller of the privately run Lowdham Grange medium-security prison, Nottinghamshire, has been transferred from his job after a police investigation unconnected with his work at the jail. The 500-inmate jail has been operated by Premier Prisons since 1996.

Police numbers down by 302

THE NUMBER of police officers in England and Wales has dropped in the past year by 302 to 126,856, mostly in senior ranks. There are also fewer women officers and only a tiny increase in recruits from ethnic minority groups despite attempts to attract more non-whites.

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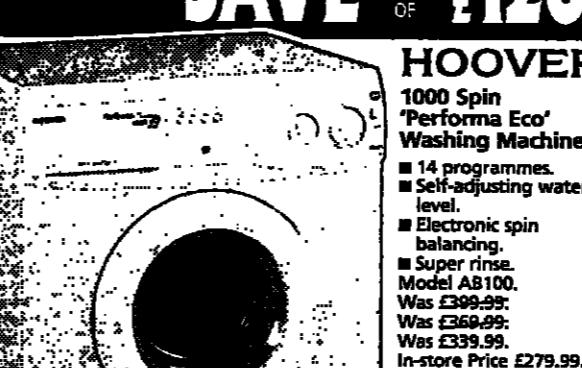
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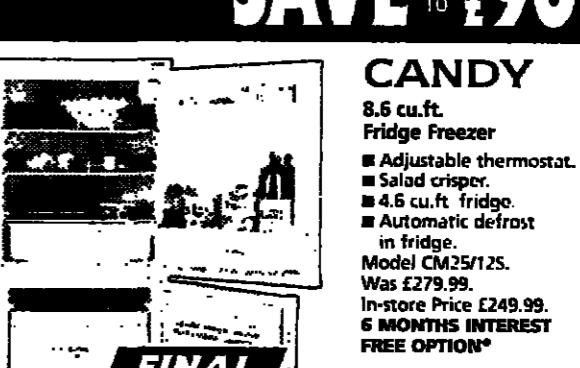
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Midnight launch boosts Apple's iMac comeback

A TOP British designer's products were spirited away from a London shop late last night. But the event was perfectly legal and will have left the designer, Jonathan Ive, of Apple Computer, very happy.

The occasion was the midnight launch in Britain of the iMac, Apple's new computer aimed at the mass market, which could just save the company from extinction.

After two years of huge financial losses, Apple is poised to record a profitable year, boosted by orders for the machine.

It even appears to be winning share from the dominant Microsoft Windows product used on 90 per cent of PCs.

The iMac was launched in the United States three weeks ago and in Japan last week. Sales are already in the hundreds of thousands and Apple's factories are working around the clock to meet demand,

BY CHARLES ARTHUR
Technology Editor

which it claims to be meeting.

Before today's launch, a lone demonstration machine was already a hit at Micro Anika, in Tottenham Court Road, London, one of two shops (the other is in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire) that opened at midnight to meet fans' demands to have the latest technology as soon as possible.

"There are seven people who are picking them up then," said Philip Barton, the shop's marketing manager. "And we have 150 in stock. Stock's not a problem - we have no complaints on that." The machine is on sale today for £999 (including VAT) at 85 shops, including the John Lewis department store.

The iMac, which needs just two plugs - one for electricity and one for an Internet con-

nexion - has an eye-catching translucent blue and white casing, and is the brainchild of Ive, 30, and the design team he heads at Apple.

In a recent interview, Ive said that the rest of the computer industry has "become incredibly conservative from a design perspective... there is an obsession about product attributes that you can measure empirically. How fast is it? How big is the hard drive? But it's also inhuman and very cold."

Ive joined Apple in 1992 from the London-based design firm Tangerine, where he had principally worked on designing bathroom items like washbasins, bathtubs and toilets.

An echo of that is visible in the soft lines of the new machine - whose coloured translucent box required the input of sweet-makers knowledgeable on the science of colour control.

The signs are now that iMac could be part of the revival that will stop the company itself going down the toilet. At Apple UK, the marketing director, Alan Healy, said the launch is "our biggest since that of the original Macintosh in 1984".

The company has set itself the target of doubling its present share of the consumer market - estimated at about 4 per cent - over the next year.

That will still leave the company far behind the dominance of Microsoft's Windows operating system, running on Intel chips. But market research from the US suggests that 13 per cent of iMac buyers are former Windows users, while 15 per cent are first-time computer buyers.

Think different.



Tom Pilston

The iMac, on which Apple is pinning its survival hopes, making its debut in London

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ITV joins race to interview suspects

BY KATE WATSON-SMYTH
AND PAUL McCANN

tions would be raised about the impartiality of the programme and whether the men were able to set their own agenda.

Martin Bashir, the BBC reporter behind interviews with Diana, Princess of Wales and Louise Woodward, the au pair convicted of manslaughter last year, met the men on Thursday days after Ms Woodward criticised the fine line between "celebrity and notoriety" in the battle for television ratings.

The interview is likely to be broadcast as part of a *Panorama* programme when the public inquiry into Stephen Lawrence's death finishes later this year.

However, a representative from the London News Network, which makes news programmes for Carlton and LWT, has also met the five men with a view to making a programme.

David Norris, 21, Neil Acland, 22, his brother Jamie, 21, Luke Knight, 20 and Gary Dobson, 22, have so far refused to answer direct questions about the stabbing at a south London bus stop in April 1993. In June, under duress, they appeared before the public inquiry but gave only evasive answers when questioned.

If, as seems likely, they are able to choose which station they talk to and perhaps who would do the interview, ques-

tions would be raised about the impartiality of the programme and whether the men were able to set their own agenda.

A spokesman for *Panorama* declined to elaborate on the programme-makers' plans: "We have a programme to make and we will see who appears on it."

Simon Bucks, programme controller of LNN, said: "We were aware that the BBC might be doing a programme and we thought it would be worthwhile looking at the possibilities of talking to them ourselves. We had a discussion with them and we made it quite clear that there could be no terms at all. We would obviously be interested in asking questions that have been avoided in the past or that have not been put to them... There will be no terms, no deals and no payments."

Max Clifford, the public relations expert, who is thought to be behind the men's decision to talk publicly, said he had received a letter from a group calling itself Justice, threatening that he would be "totally disabled" unless he severed all links with the five men.

"I have called in the police as a precaution and they are treating the matter very seriously," Mr Clifford said. "I have only given free advice to the men and I do not represent them."

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Index

Big Mac at 30 no longer burger king

BY KATHY MARKS

IT MAY HAVE escaped your attention, but this is a seminal moment in hamburger history. Next month the Big Mac, the most famous beef sandwich of all time, turns 30. Birthday festivities, though, are likely to be sober. McDonald's executives are in no mood for a party.

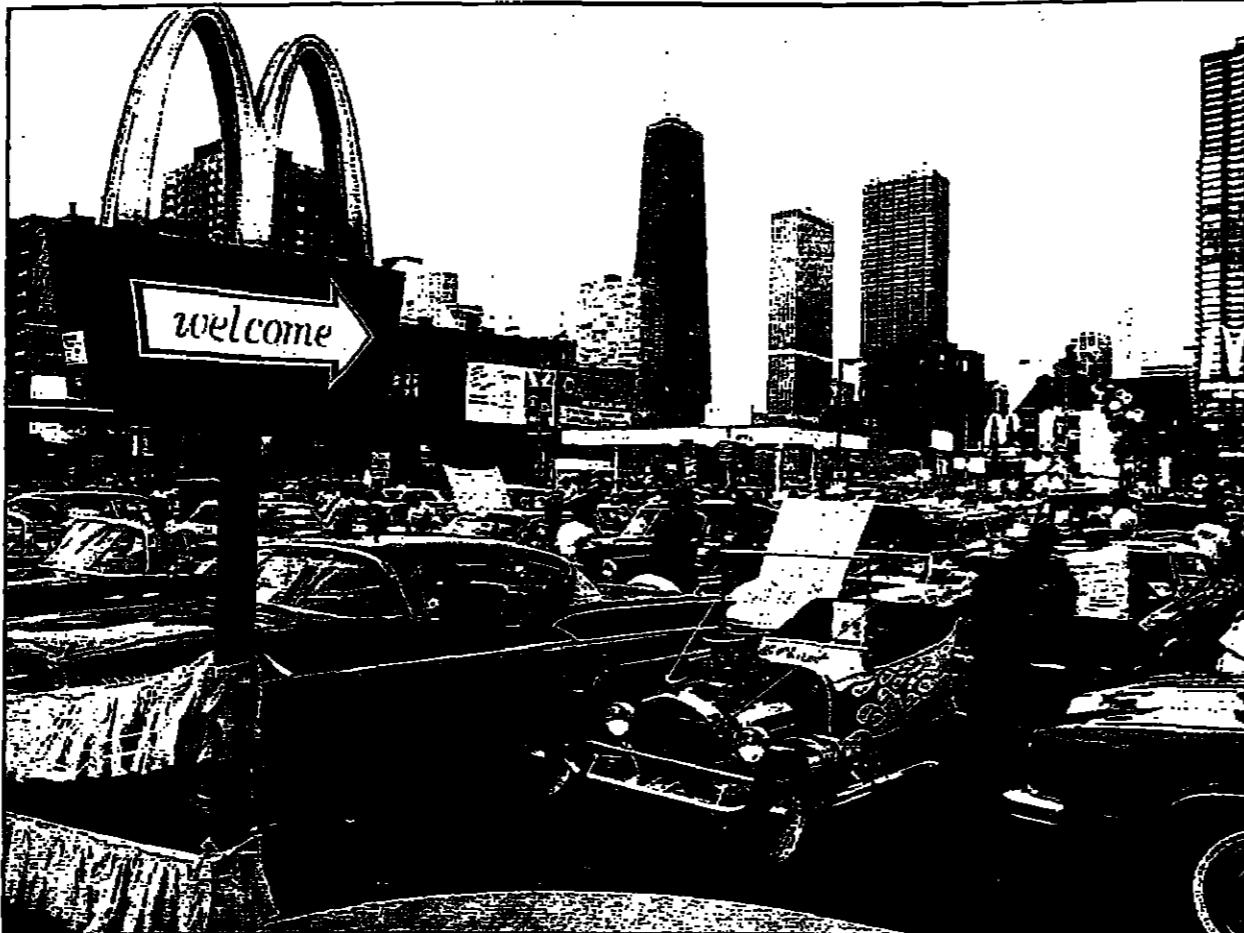
One of the world's most successful corporations is in turmoil. Profits are flat, market share is falling and a damaging guerrilla war is being waged against the chain by its sworn rival, Burger King. McDonald's, say industry analysts, has lost its way.

With the company at a crossroads, convulsed by angst about its future, the death last month of one of its two American founders seemed peculiarly symbolic. Dick McDonald opened the first fast-food restaurant with his brother, Mac, in 1940.

His demise prompted not only a period of mourning within the corporation, but also a rush of nostalgia for the days when the pace of life was slower. French fries cost 10 cents and McDonald's was unchallenged king of the burger world.

Not just the company has changed beyond recognition since then. McDonald's has transformed the planet, marching into every corner of the globe, throwing up its yellow arches in 111 countries, serving up homogenised meals everywhere from Seoul to San Salvador and, in 1968, inventing the Big Mac.

For decades, the burger chain has been happy to recite



The vintage American McDonald's drive-in (left) has expanded to 23,000 outlets at home and abroad, traditional and themed (right)

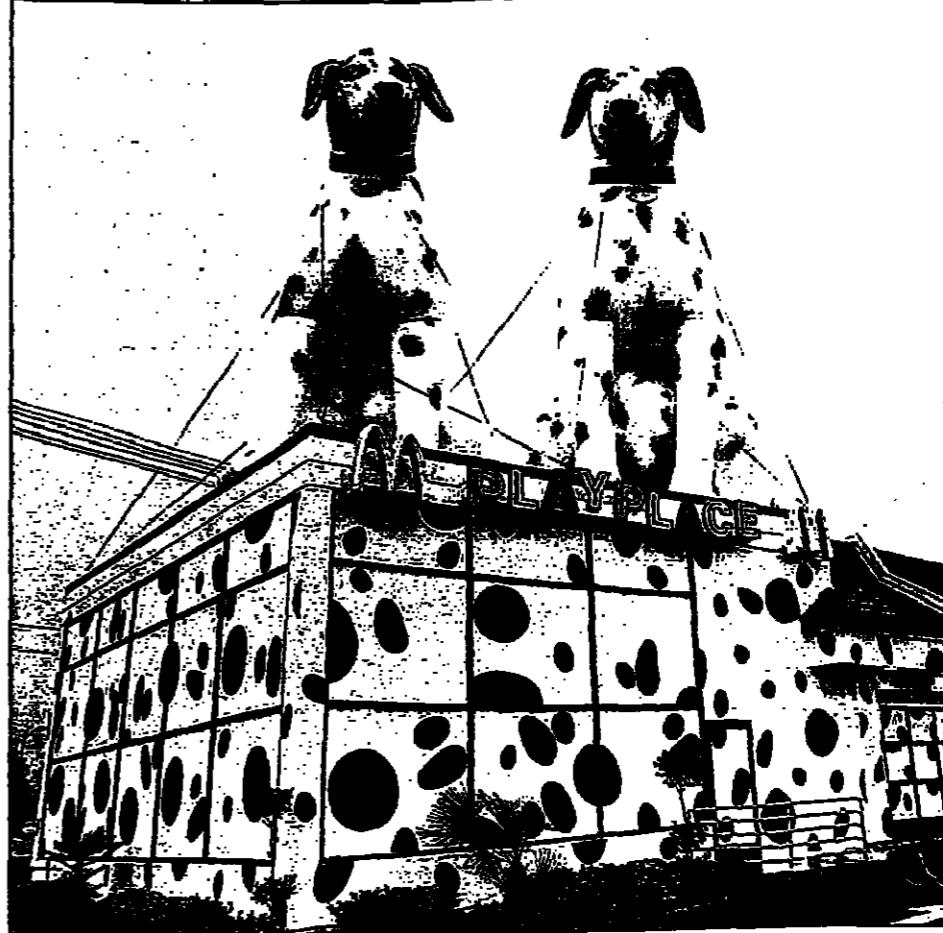
the facts and figures that underpin its phenomenal success - more than 23,000 outlets worldwide, and a new one opening every three hours; beef from nearly 1 per cent of the world's cattle placed between the company's sesame seed buns; and annual sales of

£20bn, making McDonald's the second-most recognised brand on Earth, after Coca Cola.

But of late, the smile on the face of Ronald McDonald, the clown figure, has seemed a trifle strained. No longer is the news all good. Growth outside the United States is slowing. McDonald's has also lost

America, still the most important market, profits have hardly changed in the past three years. Sales growth there has stopped keeping pace with restaurant openings, signalling the prospect of the ultimate nightmare - saturation.

McDonald's has also lost



Gamma: Peter Brooker/Rex Features

market share to Burger King and Wendy's, its two biggest competitors. To the accompaniment of an aggressive advertising campaign, Burger King has deployed its new Big King sandwich, which it claims has 75 per cent more beef and less bread than a Big Mac. McDon-

ald's has tried to fight back with the Arch Deluxe, but the product has made little impact.

A recent promotion offering Big Macs for 55 cents was unpopular with customers, because it was not made clear that they had to buy other, full-priced food to qualify.

The result of all this has been a prolonged and painful senior management shake-up that culminated in the departure earlier this summer of the corporation's chief executive, Michael Quinlan - the man who, according to a NatWest analyst, Damon Brundage, "presided over the demise of one of the great brands in American business".

His replacement and former head of the US arm, Jack Greenberg, plans to restore the company's fortunes by addressing the basics. "What we need to do is get back to our roots," he declared in an interview earlier this week, "to drive the growth of this business through innovation."

Mr Greenberg said his mission was to "reinvent" fast food by developing new products for the McDonald's repertoire.

In America, eight items are currently being tested, including the Big Xtra, a burger with lettuce and tomato, fried strips of chicken breast called Chicken Selects, and a range of breakfast bagel sandwiches, one containing steak, egg and cheese.

The brothers were sitting on a goldmine and bought the US franchise rights and then the whole business. Croc's first McDonald's in Des Plaines, Illinois, opened in April 1955 and is now preserved as a museum.

In Britain, the appetite for burgers and fries has proved prodigious since the first McDonald's outlet opened in Woolwich, south-east London, in 1974. The company's UK chairman claimed at the time that Woolwich was a cultural microcosm, saying: "If the British are going to love McDonald's, they are going to love them in Woolwich first."

The hamburger cost 10p back then, but it was the same formula of beef patty crowned with pickle, ketchup and mayonnaise, slapped between two sesame seed buns. There are now 870 restaurants in the United Kingdom.

It may be that Mr Greenberg's back-to-basics strategy will reap rewards for this huge, profit-hungry corporation, enabling it to colonise remote areas as yet unscathed by the yellow logo and to gobble up an even bigger share of global expenditure.

But he should remember that first principles are not always the best. The Big Mac, for instance, started out as the Big Boy. Fortunately, someone had the good sense to change the name.

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Wily financiers track the McDonald's Index

BY GARY FINN

A HUMBLE burger it may be, but to the economists of the world the Big Mac is more than just a fried meat patty in a sesame seed bun.

With platinum and gold, the Big Mac is now a financial yardstick by which moneymen can gauge the value of world currencies while planning their market raids.

The Big Mac Index was first published as a light-hearted venture by *The Economist* in 1986, to show how the price of a Big Mac differed in McDonald's restaurants around the world, and how the burger was a good indicator of the state of the dollar to those countries. The report is now published quarterly.

In 1993, the index was recalculated to show the valuation of each local currency against the dollar. Shrewd investors who eschewed the analysts' misplaced confidence in the Far East economies would have known as long ago as 1989 that there were problems ahead. Then the Big Mac Index revealed that South Korea was overvalued by 78 per cent and



McDonald's in Tokyo reveals all about the yen Colorific

the Japanese yen 38 per cent overvalued compared with the dollar.

The idea behind the Big Mac Index is that a shopping basket of identical goods should in theory cost the same in all countries.

In this case, the Big Mac is the basket item, and dividing a country's local currency price for the burger by the Big Mac's dollar price gives the Big Mac's "purchasing power parity", or PPP.

As the Big Mac celebrated its 30th birthday, a snapshot survey by *The Independent* found

the Big Mac (\$2.63 in the US) did indeed work like a financial barometer.

A Russian fancying Big Mac in Moscow will find their plunging rouble has 71 per cent less purchasing power when it comes to buying a Big Mac in the UK, the strength of the pound secures a Big Mac for £1.84, but hints at a 17 per cent overvaluation of sterling.

The world's most expensive Big Mac can be found in Helsinki, where Finns pay 20 markka for the pleasure. The index indicates that their currency is overvalued by 44 per cent.

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| Finland | 20 markka | 7.60 | 5.28 | +44 |
| South Africa | 8 rand | 3.04 | 6.23 | -51 |
| Mexico | 15.6 peso | 5.92 | 10.2 | -42 |
| Japan | 280 yen | 106 | 134 | -21 |
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*purchasing power parity - the local price divided by the dollar price

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Publi
JULY 1998

Lewinsky affair: Senator's outspoken attack spurs Democrat allies to turn on their beleaguered leader

A dam burst swamping Clinton's presidency

BY DAVID USBORNE
in New York

HAD THEY heard the latest in Dublin yesterday about President Bill Clinton and his sexcapades with Monica Lewinsky? One would hope not. It seems that the naughty pair had one of their Oval Office "encounters" on Easter Day two years ago - just hours after the devout Mr Clinton had attended church with his family.

It is only a rumour, of course, just like last week's story about Ms Lewinsky and what she did for Mr Clinton with a cigar. And not for the first time, it comes courtesy of Internet gossip king, Matt Drudge. Details of the Easter tryst were provided by Ms Lewinsky in testimony to the grand jury, he claims.

But whether you take Mr Drudge seriously hardly matters. The truth about the President's predicament has now become painfully obvious. He is

losing all control of the scandal that has been blossoming around him ever since his liaisons with Ms Lewinsky first surfaced last January. The dam that is holding back the waters of disgrace has not yet been breached, but with every day that passes the chances of it holding get slimmer.

A foreign trip might have seemed a good idea and to Ireland especially, where the architects of peace are right to give credit and thanks to Mr Clinton for the part he has played. But what was the sound bite crossing the Atlantic to the United States yesterday? One-word long, it was "sorry". What his public saw was their President not basking in diplomatic glory, but mumbbling apologies.

"I've already said I made a bad mistake," Mr Clinton sputtered. "And it was indefensible and I'm sorry." The remark provoked excitement, of course, because the President, while he believes he has apologised to the American people in full, had actually never said "sorry" before.

The pathetic scene was forced upon the President by one of his oldest friends and political allies, Senator Joseph Lieberman. The previous evening, Mr Lieberman had taken to the floor of the chamber and launched a most excoriating attack on the President and his abandonment of morals.

True, he stopped short of calling for impeachment. But that offers little comfort to the White House. Referring to Mr Clinton's 17 August admission on television of his "inappropriate" contacts with Ms Lewinsky, Mr Lieberman fumed: "Such behaviour is not only inappropriate, it is immoral and it is harmful." The "disgusting" conduct that Mr Clinton had admitted to was deserving, he went on, of "public rebuke and accountability".

The senator delivered his speech even after coming under intense pressure both from fellow Democrats on Capitol Hill and from the White House chief of staff, Erskine Bowles, to bite his tongue. That he ignored the advice may turn out to be a turning point in the whole scandal.

It was so important because he was a friend of the President and because, as the only observant Orthodox Jew on the Senate floor, he commands wide respect among his peers. But the most urgent worry for the White House is that the remarks will

trigger a domino effect. Both Patrick Moynihan and Bob Kerrey, two other leading Democrat senators, immediately followed Mr Lieberman's lead to criticise the President in the Senate.

And some Democrats now feel impelled to detach themselves from Mr Clinton because of the impending congressional elections in November. Take Marcy Kaptur, for instance, a Democrat representative from Ohio. On Wednesday, she demanded "public restitution" from the President, "beyond verbal expressions of regret". She told her local newspaper: "If he resigned tomorrow, it wouldn't be enough in my judgement."

The sudden evaporation of support could not be timed worse for Mr Clinton. Before the end of this month, the independent prosecutor, Kenneth Starr, is due to submit the final report of his investigation into the President to the judiciary committee of the House of Representatives.

Whatever the report contains, it seems that the President can no longer count on Democrats to blunt its impact in Congress or obstruct the judiciary committee's response to it.

A resolution already drafted by the rules committee chairman, Representative Gerald Solomon, calls on Mr Starr to attach an executive summary to his report which we'd be available to all the members on Capitol Hill and indeed to the US public. "Every member and the press are entitled to see that," Mr Solomon said this week.

Therein lies the worst of the White House's terrors. What, exactly, does Mr Starr have against the President? If it is merely the fact that he and Ms Lewinsky shared carnal pleasures, that could probably be contained. But what if Mr Starr comes forward with criminal allegations - of perjury or attempting to obstruct justice?

When the report finally appears, the White House will have to engage in a defensive battle of an intensity it has never before experienced. A war room has already been established that is reminiscent of the other campaigns that earned the President his "comeback kid" moniker. But this time around, it is unclear if the White House has the necessary puff.

Morale on Pennsylvania Avenue is rock-bottom, as Mr Clinton's lieutenants struggle with the intense personal disappointment after his 17 August admission. More than that, some of his key officers are preparing to leave his side. Mike McCurry, his embattled spokesman, is due to leave next month. And Mr Bowles is also preparing to depart. Moreover, long-running strategy battles between the President's lawyers and political advisers are still unresolved.

A minority in the White House are counselling humility. Winning the argument for now, however, are those who insist the only option is an aggressive counter-offensive against Mr Starr and his findings.

The case put by the majority is that crawling to Congress for forgiveness would portray the President as weak. It is questionable, however, whether



In Dublin Bill Clinton admits he made a "bad mistake" over Monica Lewinsky

Reuters/Larry Rubenstein



Bill and Hillary Clinton chat on their Irish visit. The president says he has apologised to his wife over Lewinsky (right)

AP/Doug Mills

New nerve gas link to Sudan revealed

BY KATHERINE BUTLER

SUSPICION THAT Sudan is secretly manufacturing nerve gas as part of a chemical warfare programme prompted the Dutch government to block a shipment of chemicals purchased from a company in the Netherlands, according to sources in The Hague.

The disclosure this week that they intercepted a consignment of chemical compounds bound for Sudan last April appears to lend some credence to Washington's justification for targeting Sudan in its cruise missile attacks of 20 August. The United States claims that traces of Empta, a chemical compound used to manufacture the lethal nerve gas VX, were found at the plant it bombed in Khartoum.

Diplomats and experts continue to challenge assurances by the US that the Shifa Pharmaceuticals factory destroyed by five cruise missiles was making not only antibiotics and malaria drugs but also the precursors to VX, the deadly poison that Saddam Hussein is believed to be stockpiling.

The Dutch revelation corroborates the US claim that Sudan was under surveillance for many months before the attack as part of a covert operation and strengthens the theory that the Americans picked the wrong factory but the right country.

In an effort to dispel mounting international scepticism, US officials said this week that the spying operation mounted on Sudan helped to establish definitively that the Shifa Pharmaceuticals Industries factory was linked to Iraq's chemical weapons programme. An agent of the Central Intelligence Agency had gained access to the area around the plant, where he scooped up soil and returned it to the US for analysis at a private laboratory.

A chemical weapons expert in the Dutch national defence research institute said there was no doubt about Sudan's involvement in a chemical warfare programme. But he expressed serious doubts about the credibility of the US tests on the Shifa plant, saying: "US intelligence is not always satisfactory. The way the sample was taken and analysed gives us grounds for doubt."

The economics ministry in The Hague, meanwhile, is believed to have acted on information filtered from the CIA through the BVD, the Dutch intelligence agency, earlier this year when it rejected an application from a Dutch exporter for a licence to ship chemicals to Sudan for the manufacture of agricultural fertilisers.

Despite demands from the Dutch parliament for a full explanation of its action, the government has so far refused to name the chemical compounds, the companies involved in the transaction or its reason for stopping the shipment.

"We had leads which suggested that these raw materials were going to be used for non-peaceful means," a foreign ministry spokesman said.

It was Sudan's presence on an unofficial blacklist operated by an informal association of 31 governments known as the Australia Group, set up after the Iran-Iraq war, that allowed the Dutch to take action. The group is believed to rely heavily on US satellites and spy network for information.

Australia Group members demand that importers in blacklisted countries prove beyond any doubt that they are not using the chemicals they want for the production of weapons.

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FOREIGN NEWS/13

Kremlin offers Duma power deal

RUSSIA'S UNLOVED acting prime minister stepped up his campaign yesterday to be allowed to run the government by announcing he would create "an economic dictatorship" to save the country from collapse.

Viktor Chernomyrdin outlined his strategy before the upper house as the Kremlin made a fresh attempt to secure him in his job by flourishing a power-sharing offer at parliament. As the battle went on to establish a government amid deepening economic chaos and social tension, so did the fall of the rouble - down to 16.9 against the dollar yesterday.

The State Duma yesterday postponed the second vote on Mr Chernomyrdin's nomination to Monday to allow time to consider the latest offer from President Boris Yeltsin, whose willingness to negotiate underlines his new weakness.

The decision to delay the vote in the Duma, which was stormed by a gaggle of angry striking coal miners, will offer the Mr Chernomyrdin a glimmer of hope, though his chances still look bleak.

Word within the corridors of parliament was that there would be a final attempt to nail down an agreement between the Kremlin and the Duma on Monday. Failing that, Mr Yeltsin will be under pressure to choose someone else. He could

BY PHIL REEVES
in Moscow

let the Duma reject his man three times and be dissolved, allowing him to install Mr Chernomyrdin. But, assuming the Kremlin allows new elections, the next parliament is certain to be far more hostile and would have the power to disband the administration.

There was no sign last night of any plan to hold talks over the weekend. With Russia in the grip of crisis, leaders appeared to be planning to spend time in their dachas, digging their potato crops and foraging for the last of the season's mushrooms.

As Moscow fiddles while Russia shudders, while Yeltsin finds himself in a fix. Chief among his problems is the Communist Party, whose leadership will find it difficult to alter its opposition to Mr Chernomyrdin. The Kremlin is offering to allow the Duma to veto most cabinet appointments, not small concession from a President who has always centred power on himself.

It is, however, not within his gift, as it would require a change in the constitution, a decision that can be enshrined in law only by a constitutional assembly or referendum. Also, the Communist leadership knows a deal with the Mr Yeltsin, who is deeply unpopular among the

growing millions of the poor, would split its own ranks, which includes elements firmly opposed to compromise.

Emerging from the shadows of the deal-making is the Mayor of Moscow, Yuri Luzhkov, tipped as a replacement for Mr Chernomyrdin in the event of a haggling fail. Mr Luzhkov is popular among leftist nationalists, having used command economics to create a city-run financial empire in the capital. Liberals say, correctly, that he rides rough-shod over human rights and the IMF is unlikely to be thrilled by his interventionist style. Nor do the regions like him much, as they accuse Moscow of sucking in almost all outside investment and commandeering the country's resources.

This may explain why the Federation Council, which comprises regional leaders, yesterday passed a symbolic vote of confidence in Mr Chernomyrdin, despite his defeat in the lower house on Monday. They listened attentively as he outlined his plan for remedying Russia's problems. He promised again to pay the wages and arrears bills.

But there were also some specifics: a plan to lower taxes to 20 per cent, and include "a controlled emission of roubles" - a remark certain to deepen fears that Russia is

planning to try to print away its rouble debts, escalating its already worsening inflation.

He said the rouble should be tied to central bank gold and foreign exchange reserves, which appears to be a step towards forming a currency board, a measure used with great success by Russia's latest economics adviser, Argentina's former economy minister, Domingo Cavallo.

Analysts said Russia does not have enough reserves to back the currency. After wiping out \$4bn (£2.5bn) of IMF money on a useless attempt to save the rouble and defaulting on foreign debts, it will have trouble getting outside help.

While Mr Luzhkov is probably favourite to stand in if Mr Chernomyrdin has to give up, others might fit the bill. These include Vgor Stoyev head of the Federation Council. A moderate with a record of working with government, he is liked by the left because of his long stint in the Communist Party, and his governorship of the Oryol region, where command economics abound.

Alexander Lebed is an outside possibility, though he has vowed not to take another government appointment. An incurable showman, he may yet be tempted to take on an heroic mission to save the motherland.



Viktor Chernomyrdin, acting prime minister (above), and the acting defence minister, Igor Sergeyev (top), are opposed by the Communist Gennady Zyuganov (centre), as General Alexander Lebed waits in the wings

Australia's most desperate bachelor finds love is on the air



Newly-weds Glenn Emerton and Leif Bunyan

THEY WERE certainly on the same wavelength. Glenn Emerton and Leif Bunyan tied the knot yesterday after a single encounter on the airwaves, listening to an Australian radio promotion called "Two strangers at a Wedding".

Glenn won the title of "most desperate bachelor in town".

Leif was at the head of the queue of the 300 women who stamped to the telephones to grab a chance on this unashamedly packaged prospect.

The prize - of a lifetime to be

BY MARCUS TANNER

spent with 24-year-old Glenn - isn't just there to be given away, however. Leif had to submit first to an on-air grilling. After all, she might not have been worthy and the listeners needed to know some crucial facts. Did she wash her underwear regularly? Was she up to it, sexually? What was her star sign? Glenn's best friends weighed in with their own toe-curving inquiries. There was a psychiatrist, too. We

couldn't have Down Under's most desperate bachelor being handed over to a nutter.

Glenn, apparently satisfied, popped the question on air and the couple were married yesterday, courtesy of the radio station sponsors, at the Hilton in Sydney. By now they will be to their honeymoon in Paris. It could hardly be anywhere else.

An unscrupulous deal cooked up between two bored twentysomethings to get a free holiday and loads of publicity? Perish the thought.

Leif, who works at a management training centre, found the whole experience "very romantic". Glenn, not to be outdone by the complete stranger he had just married, went one better and said he was "ecstatic".

"It's more romantic than marrying someone after going out with them for three years," said Leif defensively.

Well, she would say, especially after her new mother-in-law, obviously not able to see the romance of it all.

called it "an appalling stunt" and a symbol of society's degradation.

As for Glenn, there was no stopping the superlatives. "God she's beautiful," he breathed. "I couldn't have picked a better bride."

After that, however, he seemed at a bit of a loss. It is difficult, perhaps, to say a lot about someone that you have only just met on the steps of the altar. "Her personality's just so nice," he managed, diplomatically.

Sponsors of the radio station, 2Day FM, who supplied the wedding gowns, the suits and the honeymoon in Paris, said that in an era when one in three Australian marriages ends in divorce, this perfectly matched couple may be better off.

There was one setback for the promotion.

Under Australian law, marriages have to be registered a month in advance except in special circumstances, so the couple had to settle for a commitment ceremony.

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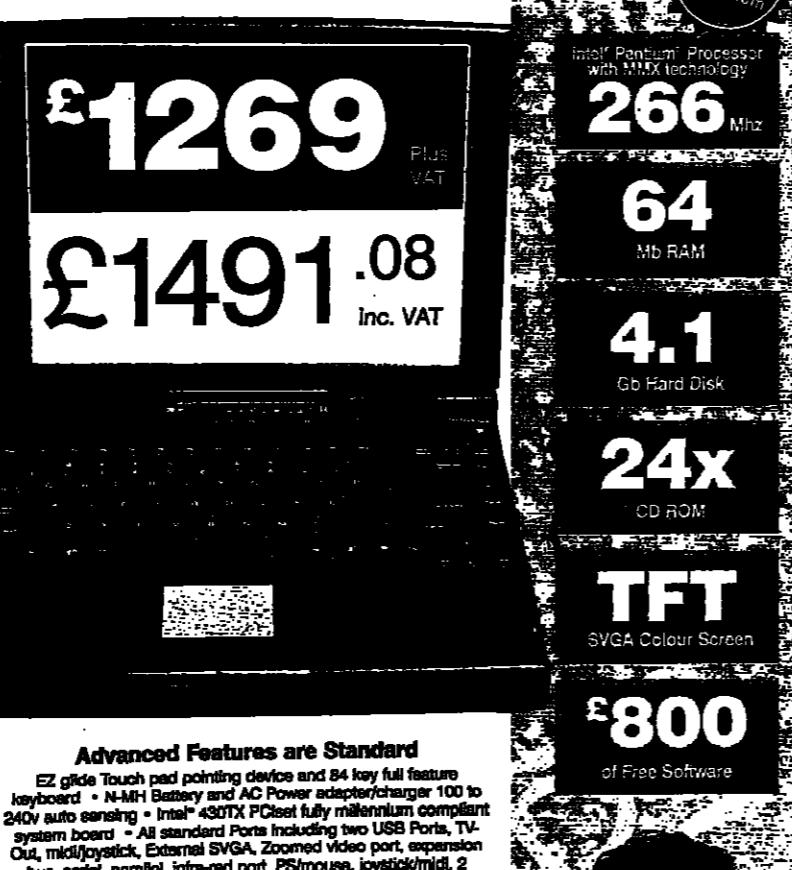
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Dachau tries to cast off shadow of death

By IMRE KARACS
in Bonn

stay, he says, but Dachau must embark on a public-relations offensive.

Much time has already been wasted, Mr Seibold, 36, complains. "For 30 years we had here in Dachau a burgomaster whose view was that the memorial is not Dachau, that Dachau was a traditional town on the edge of Munich. And after 30 years came a BM that was young, dynamic. He went to Israel, sought contacts with potential twin towns."

There are many others. Mothers go to nearby Munich to give birth, local car number plates attract crude jokes from fellow Germans, and having the country's third most frequented tourist attraction on your doorstep can also be inconvenient.

Not that the annual tide of 800,000 day-trippers can be noticed in the cobbled streets around the market square.

Arriving by train from Munich, 20 minutes away, or by coach, visitors head straight for the site that preserves the first concentration camp built in Germany.

After an average of two hours spent gazing at the barracks, the crematorium and the gas chamber, where the gas was never turned on, they flee from the cursed place, without so much as a cursory glance at the imposing Schloss. No time to buy a "Greetings from Dachau" postcard.

Now the town wants to change all that, and Mr Seibold's management consultancy has been hired for the relaunch.

For DM60,000 (£22,500), put up mainly by Dachau businesses, the firm has conducted a survey and made some recommendations. The name can



Kurt Pillar, the mayor of Dachau, which is trying to become a tourist centre despite its notoriety as the site of the first concentration camp in Germany Catherine Hess

fied with this situation, we want a change," Mr Seibold explains. "Certainly the town is a monument, and the town has a burdened past, but we want to go on the offensive. We can use it as a meeting-place, as a place of peace."

Mr Seibold's task was to identify the weaknesses of the product, as he would for any other client, and devise a strategy for improvement. Dachau, he established, is a prosperous town of 37,000 inhabitants, with the highest per capita income in the Munich region, and an unemployment rate of only 6 per cent.

But the old industry is with-

ering away - the biggest local employer, the paper factory, keeps shedding workers. In the long term, he says, Dachau's future lies in the service sector.

If only the visitors would spend some of their money in the local shops, and if only businesses from other parts of Germany could be enticed to the 1,200-year-old town. The mayor is pinning his hopes on an American company Coca-Cola would be nice, he says.

Maybe tourists could break down some barriers. "We established that Dachau is in a good location," Mr Seibold says. "It's only 15 kilometres from the

Oktobefest - no great distance. But it has too few hotel beds in comparison to other towns, and even these beds are under-used.

"It's a very sensitive problem," he goes on. "How we do get the tourists to come to Dachau? We can't just say, 'Come to beautiful Dachau'."

But perhaps they can be lured by cultural events, shows and programmes incorporated into their schedule. Take one of the biggest draws in Germany, the Oktobefest. "We must consider whether those who go to the Oktobefest might want to spend a night in Dachau. I think that might work."

There is, admittedly a grave danger of causing offence, so such packages would have to be handled with care.

"You cannot have a programme that says, 'First day

Dachau that can change the town's image - portraying it as a modern, open, tolerant town.' How to change that image is still to be decided. There are proposals for a poster campaign, featuring locals proclaiming 'I am from Dachau'.

But the two must not be linked in a programme. And there will never be a poster at the Oktobefest saying, 'Visit Dachau'.

Mr Seibold sees Dachau's future as a resort. "We must have more hotels, better hotels, hotels with congress centres. We must become a small congress town.

Want it, some don't. Dachau is more sensitive."

But essentially the techniques are the same, and it is being tried out in other locations that suffer from a negative image: Buchenwald, maybe Bergen-Belsen.

Compared to them, Dachau has some advantages. The German President, Roman Herzog, has already bought his retirement home in the town, a fact that the locals never cease to advertise.

"Dachau is a nice place," Mr Seibold insists. "People like to live there. It has some of the highest real-estate prices in the region, you know."

A 'musical satellite' beams down for our Dear Leader

IN THE latest bizarre twist to an already strange chain of events, North Korea claimed yesterday that the object fired from its shores over the Japanese coast this week was not a ballistic missile but a musical satellite that is beaming down patriotic jingles in praise of the country's reclusive leader.

North Korea provoked outrage on Monday after American spy satellites tracked what they said was the test launch of a new type of long-range ballistic missile. The two-stage missile landed in the Pacific Ocean after flying over northern Japan, to the consternation of the Tokyo government and the embarrassment of its military.

In its first direct comment on the matter, North Korea's state-run news agency put the record straight yesterday: despite a collapsing economy, fuel shortages and a famine, the isolated Stalinist state claims to have succeeded in putting a satellite into orbit, days before the election as president of its acting leader, Kim Jong Il.

Cynics overseas will regard



Kim Jong Il: Way clear for election as president

promoting scientific research for peaceful use in outer space"

The agency added, somewhat ominously that "whether this capacity will be used for a military purpose or not, entirely depends on the attitude of forces hostile to us".

But the real and most original purpose of the alleged sputnik appeared to be more festive. According to the report, "the satellite is now transmitting the melody of the immortal rev-

olutionary hymns, 'The Song of General Kim Il Sung' and 'The Song of General Marshal Kim Jong Il', and the words 'Self Reliance Korea' in Morse code."

North Korea's Supreme Assembly gathers in the capital, Pyongyang, today for a meeting at which Kim Jong Il is expected to be elected president. Four years after the death of Kim Il Sung, he will be the world's first Communist leader to succeed his father.

Cynics overseas will regard yesterday's report as a crude attempt to boost morale in a country close to collapse. Kim Jong Il inherits the last Stalinist dictatorship in the world in which industrial and agricultural production have slowed virtually to a standstill.

After Monday's incident, Japan said it would not send any more food aid to North Korea, where up to 3 million people are believed to have died of starvation. Whether many of the survivors will be cheered by tales of the juke-box in space is doubtful.

IN BRIEF

Albanians flee Serb artillery

HUNDREDS of villagers fled as Serbian forces, backed by armour and artillery, pounded ethnic Albanians west of Malisevo in central Kosovo yesterday. The attacks created possibly thousands of new refugees in the southern Serbian province.

Child suspects in killing of boy

SEVERAL CHILDREN aged under 12 are suspects in the brutal murder of a four-year-old boy that has shocked Sweden, police said. The child's body was found several hours after he disappeared from a playground, 50 yards from his home in Arvika, 100 miles west of Stockholm.

Rebel leader on treason charge

THE REBEL leader who sparked Sierra Leone's civil war in 1991 was charged yesterday with treason. Today Sankoh, the head of the Revolutionary United Front, was led handcuffed into a Freetown courtroom under heavy guard.

Television producer freed

NATALIE LIU, a television producer detained for two days by the Chinese government, was released yesterday, the CBS network said in Peking.

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BUSINESS

BRIEFING

Prior exits on a high note

AT HIS LAST annual meeting as chairman, Lord Prior yesterday sought to reassure shareholders that the strong pound and global market uncertainties would not knock General Electric Company of course. "We are currently witnessing the emergence of considerable uncertainty in the global economy and it is not possible to determine exactly how these developments will unfold and how they will affect countries, let alone individual companies. However, despite the continued strength of sterling and turbulence in a number of our markets around the world, the board believes the group will continue to make satisfactory progress this year," said Lord Prior.

European Telecom plunges

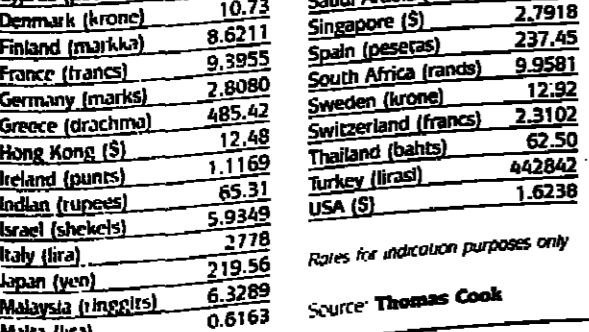
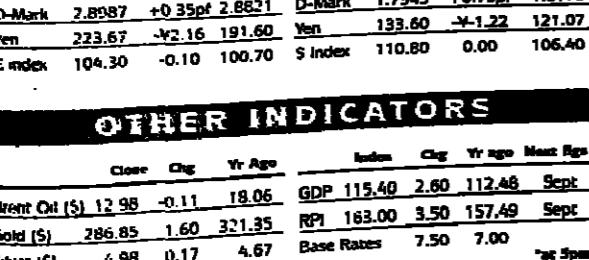
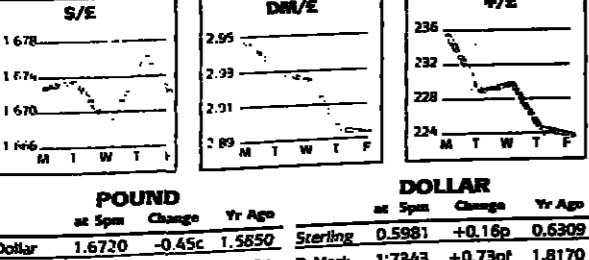
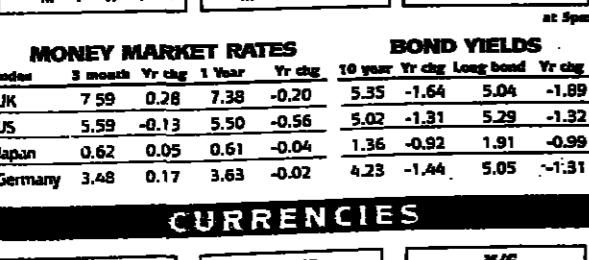
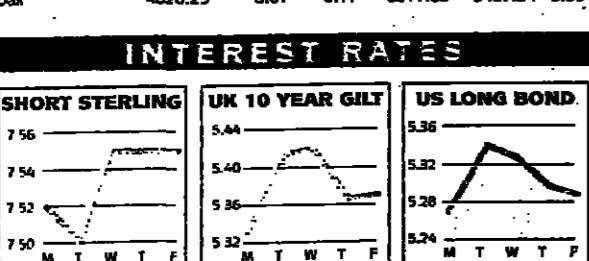
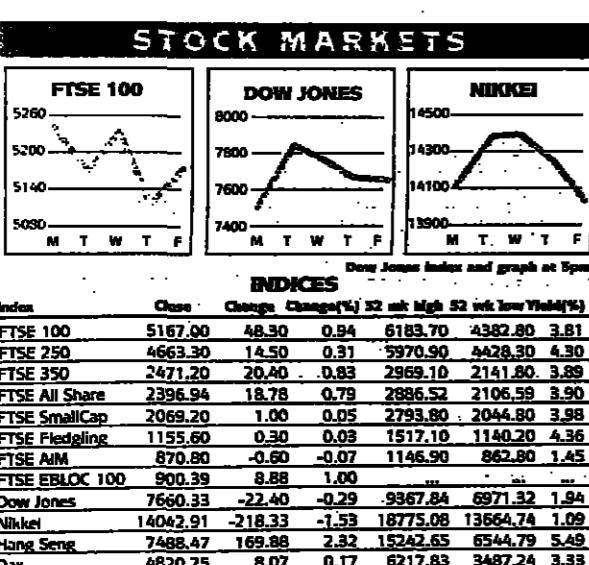
EUROPEAN TELECOM
share price, pence
420
380
340
300
260
220
180
140 SOND JFM AJAS Source: Datastream

SHARES in European Telecom lost more than a third of their value yesterday as the mobile phone distributor warned that its first-half results would be "substantially below market expectations". The shares plunged 87.5p to 142.5p as European Telecom warned that sales to export markets in Asia, Africa and the Middle East were well below budget, while a shift to lower-margin phones had eroded profits. Higher overheads, which have risen as the company prepares to launch value-added services, will also hold back profits. European Telecom said export markets outside Europe would remain volatile. However, it said better sales, combined with new products, would improve profits in the second half of the year.

C&W to open £50m call centre

CABLE & WIRELESS yesterday announced that it was creating 400 new jobs by opening a second call centre in Glasgow as part of a £50m investment to improve customer services. The call centre, which is due to open by the end of October, follows the launch earlier this year of a similar customer service facility in Scotland employing 700 people.

Celltech leaps on drug-test news
SHARES in Celltech leapt 13 per cent yesterday after American regulators said they had granted fast-track status to one of its drugs under development. The biotech company is carrying out phase II trials on its drug CDP571 for the treatment of Crohn's disease, a severe and debilitating inflammation of the intestine.



Rates for indication purposes only

Source: Thomas Cook

BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

THE HONG KONG Monetary Authority has called in local banks to a crisis meeting in Hong Kong today in a move which has sparked fears of a Malaysia-style clampdown on financial market dealings.

Dealers said the meeting could signal that new steps to control the stock market were on the way.

Hong Kong government sources insisted last night that there was no question of introducing exchange controls since these were explicitly banned by Hong Kong's constitution. The meeting would centre on the discussion of measures to

strengthen the existing currency board system which for the last 15 years has pegged the HK currency to the US dollar.

"It is not for me at this point in time to come to the specifics because that would need to be discussed with the banks," said HKMA chief representative in New York. "I just want to put the message across that the issue to be discussed will be centred around measures to further strengthen and purify the currency board system."

Hong Kong Financial Sec-

retary Donald Tsang pledged earlier this week to introduce new measures to "improve transparency of the stock market". The package could be unveiled as early as Monday.

But the government is under pressure to find a way of convincing the markets that the dollar peg which has been the linchpin on the region's economic policy since 1983 can hold, in the face of an almost universal belief that devaluation is now an inevitability.

Rachel Chan who heads the Hong Kong Government's Economic and Trade Office in London insisted that the Hong

Kong Government was committed to the free market and was not trying to introduce the kind of exchange and capital controls that Malaysia has brought in.

But such statements have failed to reassure foreign investors. "Hong Kong shorts are very nervous," said one dealer last night. He was referring to the international investors who have been selling or "shorting" the currency in anticipation of an imminent

devaluation. The Hong Kong Monetary Authority is believed to have spent HK\$120bn over recent weeks to support the Hong Kong dollar by buying shares in the market.

The HKMA has ended up with sizeable stakes in as many as 30 companies. But apart from the 3.9 per cent stake in Hong Kong & Shanghai Bank which it was obliged to disclose because of London stock exchange rules, it is refusing to release further details. The authority is also exerting pressure on brokers who have drawn up their own lists of HKMA holdings not to release

those to the public.

It is nevertheless believed that the authority has large stakes in such well-known companies as Hutchison Whampoa, the largest shareholder in Orange the UK mobile phone operator, Swire, which owns Cathay Pacific the airline, and Cheung Kong, the property company controlled by pro-China entrepreneur Li Ka Shing.

The intervention appears to have stabilised the stock market for the time being. The Hang Seng index closed up more than 3 per cent at 7,488.47 yesterday, before news of the crisis meeting had come out.

Crisis meeting sparks fear of Hong Kong clampdown

BY PETER THAL LARSEN

HAMISH BRYCE, the executive chairman of TLG, said the group had been in talks with a number of potential suitors since 31 July, when it first revealed that it had received an approach. However, the group is understood not to have had any talks with Wassall.

Analysts said Cooper's bid, which values TLG shares at a multiple of 18.8 times pre-exceptional earnings, was not a knock-out blow and may have to be raised. Warburg Dillon Read, the investment bank, was yesterday morning believed to be buying shares in the market on behalf of Cooper in an attempt to strengthen its position.

The deal marks an end to a mixed four-year tenure on the stock exchange for TLG. The company, which was a management buyout from music group Thorn EMI, floated at a price of 115p in 1994. After ini-

tially performing well, its shares slumped in 1996 when the European lighting market was hit by overcapacity and falling prices. More recently the group had been hit by worries about a slowdown in its Far East markets. Earlier this year the shares hit a new low of 62p.

Mr Bryce said the deal would give Cooper a global position in the lighting fittings market. "They're buying the number two player in Europe behind Philips and a leading position in the Far East." He added that the deal marked a "step change" in the expansion of TLG's operations.

Last year Cooper bought Menier-Swain, the emergency lighting group, for £165m. "In a stroke, they've created a global player," said Mr Bryce. However, he said it was too early to say whether TLG and Menier-Swain's operations would be integrated or whether there would be significant job losses.

Western banks sack 40% of Russian financial staff

WESTERN BANKS that have lost billions of dollars in Russia's crumbling financial markets have been laying off staff in droves as they struggle to get to grips with the crisis.

Banking sources say that 30 to 40 per cent of the 4,000 or so staff employed by Western investment banks in the Russian capital have been sacked.

SBC Warburg last month laid off 80 of its 240 Moscow staff. Another bank, MKP Renaissance, plans to lay off a similar proportion of its 700 staff, having opted to shelf plans to transfer key staff from London to Moscow for the time being.

Headhunters say that Russian employees, many of them lower-grade staff, as well as local researchers and traders, have borne the brunt of the layoffs.

London

Globalisation isn't a one-way street

THERE WAS a certain symmetry about the two takeover bids launched in the City yesterday. In both cases, a British manufacturing group fallen on hard times accepted a cash offer from a large American bidder. Both companies cited the need to go global as the reason for throwing their lot in with a larger suitor.

David Brown, a maker of gears and fluid control systems, looks almost certain to be absorbed by Textron, a giant which makes everything from Bell helicopters to car parts. Lighting group TLG is odds-on to end up as part of Cooper Industries, a large US player; although the financial engineers at Wasall, which is staying mum on what it might do with its 14 per cent stake, may still have a say in the matter.

In another country - France, say, or even Germany - the prospect of marauding Americans buying up industrial assets would be met with dismay. Not in Britain, or at least the City. Over the past year, US predators have snapped up large swathes of British manufacturing. Indeed, this is Cooper's second foray across the Atlantic in the past two years; its previous acquisition



OUTLOOK

was the emergency lighting group Menvier-Swan.

To a certain extent, this buying spree is opportunistic. Engineers, especially small and medium-sized ones, are out of favour with fund managers. Sterling's rise has eaten into their export margins while sucking in cheaper substitutes from abroad. American manufacturers, with a larger domestic market and a more supportive shareholder base, have spotted a few choice bargains.

But there is also something more fundamental going on. Manufacturing is becoming a global industry. As their customers fan out around the world in search of new

markets, suppliers are having to go with them. They now have to be capable of distributing and servicing even the most obscure machine to almost any part of the planet. Furthermore, most Americans buying manufacturers over here see a British base as the perfect bridgehead into the European market.

So, faced with the pressure to become larger but starved of the stock market capital they need to grow, British manufacturers are throwing their lot in with larger foreign operators.

But hang on. As the events of the past few months show, globalisation is not a one-way street. Markets that

have been opened up can just as quickly be closed off to foreign capital again. Although investments in plant and machinery are less mobile than the hot money flowing out of Asia and Russia, the two are inextricably linked. Without cash from the capital markets, foreign investment in these markets is bound to dry up.

What's more, foreign ownership carries risks. As the employees of Siemens' semiconductor plant in Gateshead found out recently, owners would rather lay off workers abroad than face the political flack

of closing down plants in their domestic market. Fujitsu made the same point yesterday by announcing the closure of its microchip plant in County Durham.

TLG, David Brown and all the others are probably right to ignore nationality in their quest for size. American ownership should guarantee more investment and many more jobs than had they remained independent. But there's no guarantee. If the brave new global market suddenly starts shrinking, as it is showing worrying signs of doing right now, they are likely to be the first to feel the ill effects.

Interest rates

THERE ARE two schools of thought about how to run a successful independent monetary policy - the Federal Reserve's way of doing it and the Bundesbank's. In recent years, they have been equally successful. The differences and many and varied but they are best characterised in the following way.

At the Federal Reserve, Alan Greenspan always has half an eye on what Wall Street is up to and how the markets will react to his deci-

sions. Then there is Hans Tietmeyer who in the proud tradition of German central bankers instinctively hates money changers, and believes that it is the job of a good central bank to ignore them.

Britain's monetary policy committee is still finding its feet. As the committee approaches next week's crucial interest rate decision, it will be weighing the two approaches in the balance. Should it respond to the latest seizure in financial markets and the sharp deteriorating outlook for the world economy by cutting rates? Or should it ignore the size warnings, and look only to its own number crunching for direction?

The differing approaches of Messrs Tietmeyer and Greenspan may have as much to do with their backgrounds as the very different economies they are charged to control. Mr Greenspan had a successful career on Wall Street before going into central banking while Mr Tietmeyer came up through the world of politics.

But they also reflect the vastly different structure of the economies of Germany and the United States. For all the recent hoopla about Germans rushing to buy equities, the fact remains that while the German

stock market could go pop bang and no one outside Frankfurt would notice, the 20% fall in the American stock market is another matter altogether. The impact on the real economy will be significant.

Mr Tietmeyer was in his element when he told a well-fed gathering of Frankfurt bankers this week that there was no sign of global economic recession and rejected calls for a rate cut to steady the markets' jangled nerves. Obviously, central bankers should be very mindful of the experience of October 1987 when the G7 cut rates in response to the crash only to find out later that they would have been better to leave well alone. The cut accentuated the latter stages of the boom and made the subsequent bust that much worse.

On the other hand, the Monetary Policy Committee has more than just the crisis in world markets to act on this time round. Even the overheated service sector is now slowing noticeably. In the US, Mr Greenspan has been happy to let the markets think the Fed will let US interest rates fall if there is any sign that the economy is being hurt by the Asian and Russian crises. The Bank of Eng-

IN BRIEF

Maiden result is profit for ITnet
ITNET, the computer systems specialist floated in June, said it hoped to clinch three outsourcing contracts in the next month as it unveiled its maiden results for the half year to 30 June.

Operating profits at the group, formed by a management/employee buyout of Cadbury Schweppes' IT department in 1995, rose by 18.3 per cent to £2.5m. The group expects to pay its first dividend in April 1999.

Vitec up 10%
PROFITS AT Vitec rose 10 per cent to a record £19.1m in the half to 30 June, despite the strong pound cutting growth by 6 per cent on translation, the engineering group said yesterday. The supplier of video and broadcasting equipment said that although its growth would depend on the world economy, the outlook was positive. The shares closed up 5p at 535p.

Heiton offer
IRELAND'S Heiton Holdings said it had offered a minimum of £15.7m, with a full earnings potential of £4.1m, for the entire share capital of UK's Coopers Clarke Group.

Heiton had irrevocable undertakings to accept the offer in respect of more than 90 per cent of the shares in issue of the British builders' merchant firm, so could compulsorily buy the rest of the stock, the company said.

US labour data

THE US labour market rebounded in August as General Motors workers returned to work following a nationwide shutdown. Unemployment was flat at 4.5 per cent last month.

Last month's gain of 365,000 jobs was in line with analysts' forecasts. In July, employment increased by 68,000. US Labor Department figures showed yesterday.

In-store cuppas

SAINSBURY'S said shoppers can sit take-away coffees or specialist teas at its store in Clapham, London, after The Perfection Coffee Company opened an in-store bar in a trial that could be rolled out across the 333-store chain.

The coffee bar operates as a standard concession and pays rent to Sainsbury's. The big five UK grocery retailers are all trying a range of new offers to boost sales and increase profit margins.



At the Leeds meeting yesterday were (left to right) Stephen Littlechild, director-general of regulator Offer; Energy Minister John Battle; and president of the Electricity Association, John Robert Tim Smith/Guzelian

Power groups urged to compete fairly

JOHN BATTLE, the Energy Minister, yesterday urged electricity suppliers to adopt a responsible approach to doorstep selling ahead of the start of competition in the domestic market in one week's time.

Speaking in Leeds after meeting Eastern, Yorkshire Electricity, Scottish Power and

Manweb - the first to allow customers to switch suppliers from 14 September - Mr Littlechild hailed competition as "a consumer-led revolution in energy".

But he urged companies to ensure that their contractors were fully open about prices. He said: "A market can only work with genuinely fair price

information... Sales representatives should make it clear to customers that the market is open to competition and that a number of suppliers may offer deals to customers."

"I would like them to hand over a clear written statement of the tariff options their company is offering the customer,

and a comparison between these and the equivalent prices from the local company... Finally, they should make it clear to the customer that if they want independent information or advice they should call the Offer helpline. The number of the helpline should be on the statement given to the customer."

Bank of Ireland forces RBS to buy US holding

BANK OF IRELAND yesterday made a significant gain at the expense of the Royal Bank of Scotland as it forced RBS to buy it out of Citizens, US retail bank in New England, for \$76.5m (£45.6m).

Bank of Ireland forced RBS to buy its 23.5 per cent stake by using a put option set up when the two banks merged their US operations in April 1996. It will make a profit of £153m (£132m) from the sale.

The move by Bank of Ireland will fuel speculation that it is poised to make an offer for a UK building society. Likely candidates are the Chelsea, Skipton, Paragon and Norwich & Peterborough societies.

David Holden, the head of public affairs at Bank of Ireland,

said: "We have indicated our interest in growing our presence in the UK mortgage market. But it depends on availability, price and the business."

Crucially, the exercise price of the option was as of 14 August, when the deal was first made public. That was before HSBC slumped in value following Asia's worsening economic ills and the trouble trouble of the past two weeks.

RBS paid for the stake entirely in cash, causing its capital base to slip below the 6.5 per cent level normally considered "comfortable" by banks and by the Bank of England. Tier One capital fell by 90 basis points from 7.2 to 6.3 per cent.

George Mathewson, the chief executive of RBS, yesterday admitted that Bank of Ireland had been lucky to strike a deal at the appointed time. "I think the timing was a bit fortuitous for them. But the reality is that we are still paying a price which is pretty attractive."

Mr Mathewson declined to rule out a sale of all of Citizens to a third party. "Like all our assets we continually review it. But we now have 100 per cent of an excellent asset. At the moment our strategy is to continue organic growth."

However, he insisted that the deal was "not conditional" in the sense of being a necessary part of any further corporate activity. Bank of Ireland shares slid 10p to 90p, while RBS shares fell sharply from 345p to 324p.

RBS agreed the put option as part of the 1996 merger of Citizens bank with First New Hampshire, until then wholly owned by Bank of Ireland. Bank of Ireland also received \$230m (£132m) as part of the deal.

The price of the stake is more galling for RBS given the recent markdown in US banks. Bank of Ireland's stake was valued at \$435m when it bought it in April 1996 and has slipped back since bank valuations peaked this year.

Some analysts had expected the price to be higher at around 2500p. With 100 per cent control of Citizens, RBS said earnings will be slightly enhanced, by 1 to 1.5 per cent.

David Brown accepts £195m US bid

BY PETER THAL LARSEN

Textron, which makes Bell helicopters and Cessna light aircraft, said it would integrate David Brown into its Fluid and Power division. Most of David Brown's 3,000 staff are likely to keep their jobs as the businesses barely overlap.

Chris Cook, the chairman of David Brown, said the company had agreed to the bid after

deciding it was the best way to build up a global position in its markets. "As the world changes, it is becoming increasingly important for our business to have global reach," he said.

Mr Cook said Textron was likely to continue developing the

businesses. Textron is in the process of selling its financial division for \$4bn (£2.8bn) and is planning to invest the proceeds in its industrial operations.

Mr Cook and Chris Brown, the chief executive, have irrevocably accepted the bid on behalf of their joint 7.3 per cent holding. Henderson Investors and AMP Asset Management, which control 22.5 per cent, have also accepted the offer.

about a global economic downturn. Fleated at 170p in April 1993, the shares touched an all-time low of 162.5p last month.

Lewis Campbell, the president and chief executive of Textron, said the deal offered a "strong, global platform" and "new key locations to Textron's global manufacturing presence".

Mr Cook said Textron was

Well-oiled Footsie comes up with a modest rebound

FOOTSIE yesterday managed a modest rebound from Thursday's plunge, helped by the oil sector, one of the market's recent underperformers.

The battered oil stocks enjoyed an unfamiliar surge on the back of Thursday's jump in the price of crude. A few traders must have thought they had had one too many at lunch as they stared at the leaders' board. There they were, the great casualties of the oil price slump, revelling in their new status of big risers.

Shell, fresh from its upturn with rival Texaco, led the advance with a 9.8 per cent rise to 361.5p. Merrill Lynch lent a helping hand, advising clients to switch from Exxon into the Anglo-Dutch giant. Enterprise Oil was not far behind, drilling a 25.5p advance to 350.5p as the former oil price mixed with vague talk of a bid from the Italian group ENI. BP was also in good form, rising 4 per cent to 267.5p.

AUGUST was a pretty dismal month for fledgling companies. The junior Alternative Investment Market index fell around 7 per cent in the month, reports stockbroker Duraclear's latest AIM bulletin. The worst performer was electronics group Selector, which lost 94 per cent to 2.5p after a profits warning.

Brightest light was Fielders, a maker of tractor tyres, which more than doubled in value to 74p after two former Hanson directors bought a 30 per cent stake.

Even Lasmo, the oil explorer which has had a torrid time of late, posted a 4p rise to 158p. Shame that the increase came far too late to avoid an almost certain relegation from the Footsie next week. The extractors' good performance was capped by Billiton, the mining group that a 7.9 per cent stake, the exploration minnow, jumped on the bandwagon and soared 43 per cent to 68p. And the beautifully-named Pan American added an AIM contribution to the party, rising 22 per cent to 11p, after announcing that it will soon start drilling in Bolivia.

The mid-cap explorers did not disappoint either, with Cairn Energy firming 8p to 114p, British Petroleum up 13.5p to 240p and Premier Oil 5 per cent higher at 26.25p. Socio, the exploration minnow, jumped on the bandwagon and soared 43 per cent to 68p. And the beautifully-named Pan American added an AIM contribution to the party, rising 22 per cent to 11p, after announcing that it will soon start drilling in Bolivia.

This well-oiled bonanza helped the Footsie to snap the

recent trend and decouple from Wall Street. The benchmark index finished 48.3 points higher at 5,167.0, even though the American index was in the red when London closed. The undercard had a reasonable day too, with the mid cap finishing up 14.5 at 4,663.3 and the small cap creeping 1 point higher at 2,069.2.

AB Food was one of the few stocks to break the oil dominance in the Footsie's upper echelons. The food producer, famous for its defensive status, rose 37.5p to 522.5p. The Sets system could have played a part in this surge, as a trade with a 10p spread went through at 524p when AB was bumbling along at 501p.

Other food stocks had a rougher ride. Asda and Tesco were hit by a big sell order. Dresdner Kleinwort Benson was rumoured to have gone through with two large "bought trades" at below market prices. The deals left Tesco 6p lower at 167.5p and Asda 1.5p worse off at 218.5p. DKB was also active in Sainsbury, this time above the prevailing price. The stock fell 4p to 528p.

Orange was in demand, as Merrill Lynch said "accumulate" and slapped on a 1,200p-18p share price target. DKB also weighed in in favour of the mobile phone group and the shares closed 23.5p higher at 573.5p.

Royal Bank of Scotland was among the blue-chips on a downward slope. The high-street lender took a bit of a bat-

CHORION has enjoyed a thrilling two days. The company, which owns the rights to books by Agatha Christie and Enid Blyton, soared 16.7 per cent to 17.5p. Good results on Thursday were followed yesterday by directors' share buying. Viscount Astor, a tourism minister in the last Tory government, spent £170,000 to buy 1 million shares, while the chairman, John Conlan, bought 195,000 for more than £22,000. Managing director Nick Tamblin spent £15,000 for 100,000.

TLG, the former Thorn Lighting Group, surged 11.3 per cent to 166.5p after agreeing a 160p-a-share bid from Cooper Industries of the US. Rumours of a counter-bid from Wasall spiced up trading.

David Brown, the gears and pumps maker, moved up 36.5p after the US group Textron launched a 290p-a-share cash offer.

On the negative side of the small cap, European Telecom, a mobile phone handset distributor, was savaged by a profits warning. The shares shed 38 per cent to close at 142.5p after the company said that exposure to emerging markets would curb profits.

Litho Supplies fell 9.5p to 153p after the printing materials group warned of "difficult conditions" in the second half.

SEAOQ VOLUME: 883.9m
SEAOQ TRADES: 50,363
GILTS INDEX: n/a

COMPANY RESULTS

| Name | Turnover (£) | Pre-tax (£) | EPS | Dividend | Pay day | X-div |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |

</tbl_r

SPORT

Baseball: St Louis Cardinals slugger prepares for what may be a record-breaking showdown with Chicago Cubs rival

Mighty Big Mac homes in on legend

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

Footsie with aound

IN THIS magical late summer of American sport, one image and one place stand out. The place is Busch Stadium, home of the St Louis Cardinals baseball club, with the city's great Gateway Arch gleaming high beyond it in the hot late afternoon sun. The image is of kids, hundreds of them, all wearing a red Cardinals shirt emblazoned with the number 25 and carrying a fielder's glove, waiting outside the gates for that night's game.

The instant they open, at 4.50pm precisely, the yelling multitude race for a section in the third tier, away over deep left-field. It is called Big Mac Land and it does not celebrate a certain type of hamburger. It is named in honour of the Cardinals first baseman - Mark McGwire according to his birth certificate, No 25 according to the game programme, but for an entire and awestruck nation, just plain and simple "Big Mac".

The kids go to that remote spot so early because batting practice is coming up, and that's where Big Mac has a habit of hitting home runs. And who knows, just maybe they'll catch one. More importantly, he hits them there in the real games too. In fact, Mark McGwire has hit so many in ball parks around the country this summer that within the next few days, within a week or two at most, he will erase the most famous record in American sport. Back in 1961,

Roger Maris hit 61 home runs, earning a nation's gratitude for removing Babe Ruth's 60 in 1927 from the record books. In 1998, McGwire is on statistical course to smite 69.

The record has such resonance because the home run is part of the American soul. It is a stupendous feat of the human eye and human brute force. In the 0.4 seconds a 90 miles-per-hour pitch takes to cover the 60 feet from the mound to home plate, the batter must size up the trajectory, decide whether to hit it, and then bring a three-inch wide cylindrical bat onto the ball and dispatch it at least 100 yards on the full toss within the arc - to use cricketing terms - between midwicket and cover. The achievement is simple, unarguable and, for a statistics-obsessed nation, the ultimate truth. You can't fake a home run. You can't edge one. You can't finesse one. You just belt one.

The heroes of the trade are called sluggers, and legends encrust their deeds. Take Babe Ruth's famous "called shot" in the 1933 World Series, when he is said to have pointed to the place in the crowd where he planned to deposit the next pitch for a home run, and duly did so. No matter that camera footage from the time doesn't support the story. It is part of sluggers' lore, like the Babe's belly and Mickey Mantle's

boozing. And now McGwire is shaping up to be the greatest slugger of all: greater than Maris, greater than Hank Aaron, even though he is unlikely to top Aaron's record of 755 career home runs. Greater, by some measures, even than Ruth.

For Mark McGwire was designed by the Almighty to hit home runs. His forearms are like other men's thighs; his thighs like wine vats. In his huge hands the bat is like a five cent fly-swatter, which he flicks lazily back and forth as he crouches waiting for the pitch. In his batting helmet, with his cropped red hair and goatee beard, he looks like a Norse god - though set against McGwire's soft sins and 250lbs, even Thor would be a pygmy by comparison. And when he hits one, it goes. A McGwire home run does not merely clear the fence, more often than not it reaches the altitudes of Big Mac Land.

The record has been in his sights from the moment he homered in each of the Cards' opening four games. Thereafter, the statistical markers have fallen like leaves in autumn. On 5 May in New York he hit his 400th career home, in the fewest at-bats in Major League history. He's become the first man in history to hit 50 homers in three consecutive seasons. He's broken the National League record (it was 50). He's broken his previous personal best (68 in 1997), he's already hit more home runs in a season than any right-handed hitter (Maris and Ruth were both lefties).

There was a sticky patch in August when pitchers - not unreasonably - wouldn't throw the ball anywhere near him and earned jeers even from their own crowds for doing so. For a fortnight or so, McGwire was becalmed in the high 40s. But then he broke free. Consecutive two-homer nights this week lifted him to 59 and, with 23 games left and barring injury, it's a matter of when, not if, the record falls. And all America is willing him to succeed. In the court of public opinion, the pitcher who deliberately walks him now is instantly convicted of cowardice and high treason.

How different from 37 years ago and Roger Maris, hamstrung by two Yankee immortals, the dead Ruth and his own, far more popular teammate Mantle, with his rascal's grin and hell-raising lifestyle. Many fans openly pulled for Maris to fail, and to this day he is regarded as something of a one-season wonder. But not even McGwire's recent admission he takes the steroid-like drug androstenedione (legal in baseball but banned in many sports) has dented a nation's love affair with him.

He draws sell-out crowds wherever he plays. The home count is a regular feature on the nightly network news. He has borne round-the-clock media intrusion with grace and stoicism, and amid the hubbub

is pleasantly modest: "I kind of amazed myself I hit that one out," he remarked almost ruefully after his first homer on Wednesday night in Miami - a prodigious 49ft blast from a pitch he picked up like a golf drive, from some 30s of the ground. "How the heck did you hit it?" the Marlins catcher asked me the next time I came up. I told him: "I have no idea."

But, amazingly, McGwire is not the only one in the chase. He may have caught the country's imagination, but at his shoulder, tracking him like the distance runner hanging on the leader's shoulder with a couple of laps left, is Sammy Sosa of the Chicago Cubs.

The two epitomise the universality of baseball in the Americas - the brawny dentist's son from affluent southern California, and the poor black kid from the Dominican Republic who arrived in the US in 1986, weighing barely 10 stone. Since then, Sosa has fattened up and muscled up. Most importantly, he's learnt to wait for the pitch to hit, and this year everything's come together. He already has 56 homers, and has Maris firmly in his sights. If he hits a magic streak (homers,

buses in the National League central division, tend to come in bunches) he could yet overhaul McGwire. Either way, it'll be the biggest day for the Dominican Republic since it gained independence.

But first things first. Next Monday and Tuesday, the Cubs and the Cardinals meet in St Louis for the final two of their 11 encounters this season. The games, traditional der-

bies in the National League central division, have been sold out for ages. This time, though, they could be historic, if either McGwire or less probably Sosa, chooses the moment to seize Ruth's inheritance.

It is certain. Big Mac Land will be bursting hours before game time, packed with kids stretching out their gloves and praying the big man will belt one their way.



Mark McGwire, St Louis Cardinals' prolific batter, blasts his 58th home run of the season in a game against the Florida Marlins on Wednesday

AP

HISTORY MAKERS AND CHASERS: FOUR MEN AND AMERICA'S MOST CELEBRATED SPORTING RECORD

BABE RUTH

60 home runs in 1927



The most famous baseball player in history and probably the most celebrated figure in American sport. Set a record of 60 home runs in a season, which stood for 34 years until it was eclipsed by Roger Maris in 1961. Joined the New York Yankees from the Boston Red Sox, who have never won the World Series since and are said to have been under the "curse of the bambino" ever since letting him go.

ROGER MARIS

61 home runs in 1961



Broke the legendary Babe Ruth's record in 1961 when he hit 61 homers in a single season. Record has stood ever since, but Maris never received widespread acclaim. Proved to be little more than a one-season wonder and was never quite forgiven either for beating Ruth's record or for eclipsing his more popular New York Yankees colleague, Mickey Mantle. Died of cancer in 1985 at the age of 51.

MARK MCGWIRE

59 home runs and counting



Aged 34, the son of a dentist, he went to the University of Southern California and was an established Major League player by the age of 24. Has the best home run strike-rate in baseball history and hit 58 homers for the St Louis Cardinals last year. Has been on course to break Roger Maris's mark for most of the season and went into last night's game needing just two more home runs to break the record.

SAMMY SOSA

56 home runs and counting



Aged 29, born in the Dominican Republic, where he sold oranges and shone shoes to help his mother feed a family of six. Early in his career he had a reputation as an undisciplined, maverick player, but this season has finally lived up to his potential. Having recently caught up with McGwire's home runs tally, he has fallen behind again this week as his rival hit two homers in successive matches.

Familiar story of success followed by failure

I LIKE TO think I'm efficient when it comes to financial matters. I'm not, but I like to think I am.

The other night, for instance, I had some household bills to sort out, so I got straight down to the business of watching this extremely interesting documentary about volcanoes.

The basic format was that you were shown an interview with a vulcanologist, at those who study volcanoes term themselves, then you were shown extended footage of red-hot lava shooting into the air and mountain peaks sporting mile-high plumes of ash. Then you were told that the vulcanologist tragically died in the eruption.

As I pondered on the psychology of the average vulcanologist - when they're not standing on the smoking rim of a volcano, do they like to



MIKE ROWBOTTOM

fill their time by dangling off high ledges or hopping on the edge of train platforms? - I was told something which has since made me rather thoughtful.

We are all, apparently composed of atoms released by volcanic eruptions. The fire, according to the narrator's closing line, is in all of us. I'm not sure that I like this recycled idea. After all, if my body is just a compilation of old bits, that might mean my mind is also just...

Let's leave that particular line of enquiry for now. But let's stay with the recycling idea, because, unless we are talking about newspapers, bottles and cans, it is not something we like to dwell on. Because it diminishes our individuality.

Even the forms of words which sum up the cyclical experience of human life have been constantly recycled: "There's nothing new under the sun," or, as Somerset Maugham put it, "the greatest truths are too important to be new."

Nowhere is this more true than in sport, the symbolic arena where human triumphs and disasters find constant expression. Thus football teams rise and fall like dynasties; athletes arrive, flourish and fade. Success is cyclical - yet people seem unwilling either to acknowledge or accept this basic fact.

A couple of years ago there was a large din made, on the airwaves and in the columns of newspapers, and the burden of it was this: Britain is an Olympic failure, a nation of faded glory.

That only one gold medal was secured from the 1996 Atlanta Games, courtesy of the rowers Steve Redgrave and Matthew Pinsent, certainly served to strengthen the claims of those who wrote the whole campaign off as a disaster.

Had Jonathan Edwards' foot been one centimetre further back on the triple-jump take-off board when he took flight on what was the

longest effort of the final, Britain would have had a gold in the athletics as well, rather than the silvers contributed by Edwards, Steve Backley, Roger Black and the 400-meters relay team.

Shortly before he resigned as executive chairman of the troubled British Athlete Federation last year, Professor Peter Radford gave a speech to a gathering of reporters which detailed the difficulties involved in bringing together all the disparate elements within the sport.

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remained the same. Only the names had changed, that is, the majority of them.

Among the exhibits at the recent 50th anniversary commemoration of the 1948 London Olympics was a selection of newspaper reports from the time. John Macadam's column in *The Express*, written shortly before the Games got underway at Wembley Stadium, had a curiously familiar ring to it.

"Now," he wrote, "what's all this about the decadence of British sport? What's all this nonsense about the vanished will-to-win? Is Denis Compton decadent? Kindler communities give other athletes Orders of Merit for less."

However, the subsequent failure of some of those athletes to go on and beat the best in the world has already caused the large din to re-emerge in some quarters: "The 2000 Olympics are almost upon us and where are the Coes of yesterday?"

Coes come and Coes go. Plus ca change. But then you will have read that before.

tree

Holland's hope in Land Of Dreams

By RICHARD EDMONDSON

ONLY TWO riders have a semblance of a chance of catching Kieren Fallon in the jockeys' championship this year, and one of them isn't Frankie Dettori. Darryl Holland has the surprise success story of 1998, as he closes in on a century of winners without much national reportage.

Much of the media blackout has been of the 26-year-old Mancunian's own design. The press analysis of Holland's severances with first Barry Hills and then Mark Johnston has upset the jockey, and his lips were definitely zipped after he was refused a licence to ride in Hong Kong for a third season. "Dutch" has returned from the island both an improved rider and, according to the man himself, a more astute human being. "I think I've come back a better person from over

there," he says. "I'm better at presenting myself with people, television and the media."

"I love my racing here because it's the best in the world and money can't buy everything, especially not English racecourses. But of course you

RICHARD EDMONDSON
Nap: Rabah
(Epsom 4.00)
NB: Land Of Dreams
(Haydock 3.30)

miss the money in Hong Kong, because over there I was getting about five times the amount I might here."

Holland swaps one land of dreams for another today when he participates in the Stanley Leisure Sprint Cup at Haydock. Mark Johnston's Land Of Dreams is his conveyance in the Group One contest as Holland attempts to erase the

memory of a sloppy run in York's Nunthorpe Stakes.

That day, Land Of Dreams finished behind the comet that was Ian Balding's Lochangel. The half-sister to Lochsong, like Sunday's French winner Andreve, will be a popular choice today for those who adhere to the sprinters-in-form theory. Connections have only just finished clearing away the party debris.

Haydock's banker is Crown Of Trees (2.30), who is sent up from David Loder's yard. The Newmarket trainer has been trying to send out a two-year-old loser for some time now but his horses keep letting him down.

Epsom, like Haydock sponsored by Stanley Leisure, is supported by people who have got most of our money already. The main contest on the Surrey card is the Grosvenor Casinos September Stakes, which is populated by several familiar

names. The one to be on though is the only representative from the Classic generation, RABAH (nap 4.00).

For those requiring pure quality, tomorrow's racing features Group Ones in Ireland and France. In Longchamp's Prix du Moulin, John Reid links up at the top level with O'Brien and Bellydoyle for the first

time since he used to ride horses for the great Vincent. Now he combines with another grandmaster in young Aiden, who sends out the Derby disaster Second Empire.

Last year's top-class two-year-old has something to prove, as might his pilot. Reid's relationship (and riding post) with Robert Sangster appears

to have hit turbulence following the revelation that the owner will be courting Jimmy Fortune at next week's St Leger meeting. This Reid however does not bend easily. Second Empire looks more attractive than Britain's Desert Prince and Almussatirak, and has Japan's Seaking The Pearl to beat.

The jewel at the Curragh is

Ed Whitaker/Racing Post

THIRSK

HYPERION

2.10 Whistle Test 2.40 Just Name It 3.10
Truffle 4.35 Ribblesdale 4.15 Wossata 4.50
Short 5.20 Supercatflaglistik 5.50 Lively Project

GOING: Good

STANDS: Straight course - stands side; round course - inside.

DRAW ADVANTAGE: High for 51 and 61.

Left-hand course, level but quite sharp.

Course W of town on A681. Thresh station km 1. ADMISION: £1.50. Pits: 100. Car park: 200. Refreshments: Canteen, pub.

LEADING TRAINERS: M Johnston (9) 1st (16%) J Berry 15-12

11th (14%) J McManus 10-12 (11%)

LEADING JOCKEYS: A Weller 25-17 (23%) K Doherty 22-33

63-33% A Cuttane 14-14 (15%) Alex Greaves 9-7 (11%)

FAVOURITES: 167 won in 491 races (34%).

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Haddyke, Nescot, Sharrif, 4.50. Short, Supercatflaglistik (voted 5.20).

SCIMITHER (voted 5.50). Drive, Magic, 4.50. Supercatflaglistik (voted 5.50).

2.10 CELHIRE SELLING STAKES (CLASS F) £3,000 added 1m

1 200G MURPHY'S GOLD (7) R Whiston 7.0 ... R Whiston (9) 10

2 02303 MARGARET'S DANCES (20) JL Eyes 5.51 ... K Doherty 2

3 00030 CENSOR (198) (D) N Nichols 6.0 ... Alex Greaves 6

4 02328 EXECUTIVE SWEEP (47) R Elson 4.80 ... T Whiston 7

5 01049 HONEYCHOICE (15) (D) M Hickford 5.50 ... J Weens 9

6 02302 ZAHLER (W) 4.80 ... R Hickford 5.50 ... J Weens 9

7 00404 FINAL CLAIM (9) J French 3.98 ... G Doherty 8

8 44500 REGENCY TIMES (13) Easty 3.89 ... A Cuttane 14-15

9 01424 SIEGER WATER (4) W Brabone 5.89 ... A Garth 7

10 00042 RIBBLEDALE (25) D Odds 3.89 ... D Hickford 12

11 00043 RIBBLEDALE (22) D Odds 3.89 ... D Hickford 12

12 00041 RIBBLEDALE (22) D Odds 3.89 ... D Hickford 12

13 00040 RIBBLEDALE (22) D Odds 3.89 ... D Hickford 12

14 00041 RIBBLEDALE (22) D Odds 3.89 ... D Hickford 12

15 00040 RIBBLEDALE (22) D Odds 3.89 ... D Hickford 12

16 00040 RIBBLEDALE (22) D Odds 3.89 ... D Hickford 12

17 00040 RIBBLEDALE (22) D Odds 3.89 ... D Hickford 12

18 00040 RIBBLEDALE (22) D Odds 3.89 ... D Hickford 12

BETTING: 11-2 Margarets Dances, 8-2 Celhires, 8-2 Murphy's Gold, Regency Times, 10-1 Censor, 8-1 Sharrif, 12-1 others

FORM VERDICT

MURPHY'S GOLD would not normally be the choice on this track, but the opposition is modest enough to give him the vote. Censor is an interesting alternative.

2.40 EBF BUSINESS FURNITURE CENTRE MAIDEN STAKES (D) £5,500 2YO 1m

1 00020 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

2 00021 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

3 00022 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

4 00023 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

5 00024 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

6 00025 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

7 00026 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

8 00027 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

9 00028 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

10 00029 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

11 00030 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

12 00031 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

13 00032 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

14 00033 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

15 00034 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

16 00035 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

17 00036 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

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19 00038 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

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39 00058 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

40 00059 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

41 00060 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

42 00061 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

43 00062 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

44 00063 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

45 00064 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

46 00065 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

47 00066 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

48 00067 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

49 00068 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

50 00069 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

51 00070 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

52 00071 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

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54 00073 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

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61 00080 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

62 00081 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

63 00082 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7

64 00083 PART OF ME (20) J McManus 6.0 ... R Whiston 7</

PUNTERS' GUIDE

Andreyev ready for a speedy return

Simon Holt of Channel 4
Racing analyses today's
Stanley Leisure Sprint Cup

Andreyev: Fresh from a Group Three win in France on Sunday he will be spot on for this and will love cut in the ground, having won a Listed event at Newcastle in June in the mud. Beaten half a length when third to Tomba in Royal Ascot's Cork & Orrery Stakes. The more rain the better.

Bolshot: Sixth to Lochangel in the Nunthorpe Stakes at York and may be better over the *mazinum* trip, at which he took Sandown's Temple Stakes and the King's Stand Stakes at Ascot's Royal meeting. Likes it fast.

Cretan Gift: Fourth to Tomba at Royal Ascot. Acts on most types of ground. Usually comes from behind but cannot give this company too much rope.

Elmudin: One of two Group One winners in the field and dazzling in the July Cup. Flopped when coming back to five furlongs in the Nunthorpe. That bad run has not been explained and he has never run on a really soft surface. However, he does look the class horse.

Superior Premium: In fine heart having clinched a hat-trick at Chester, here and in Goodwood's Stewards' Cup. Has a bit to do in this class but if still on the up and cannot be discounted.

Tomba: Promoted from third to second in this race last year and could have won but for being hampered. Shone when lifting the Cork & Orrery at Royal Ascot and connections are hoping for easy going. Has a real chance against some who have question marks about them.

HAYDOCK

2.00: PERFECT PARADIGM is running well and will be suited by the conditions. The unexposed pair Shouk and Red Ramona should also go well.

3.00: CROWN OF TREES can follow up his Kempton debut victory, possibly at the main expense of newcomer Biennando. Both colts are clearly well-regarded, hence their entries for the Group One Racing Post Trophy.

3.30: TAMARISK gets a confident vote ahead of Land Of Dreams and the soft-ground lover Tomba. Yorkies Boy could go well at a decent price.

EPSOM

2.55: FORGOTTEN TIMES is an interesting contender and may oblige at rewarding odds. Emperor Naheem is well-drawn and the most likely winner otherwise.

2.55: HYPERION'S TV TIPS

3.35: PRINCESS DANIELLE has a decent chance at a nice price here in a race in which several have a negative against them. She wasn't beaten for last time, is on a fair mark and her yard is in really good form. Sister Groom should also go well.

4.00: HABAH, game and progressive, has a good chance against his elders here, having run up against the classy Sea Wave at York last time. Soft ground would be a worry though.

4.35: JUST IN TIME ran away with a Goodwood maiden (1m2f) last time and, having been entered for the 2.35 at the five-day stage, is presumably expected to stay this longer trip.

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HAYDOCK

HYPERION

2.00 Perfect Paradigm 3.30 TAMARISK (map)
2.30 Crown Of Trees 4.05 GRANNY'S PET
3.00 Bielles 4.40 Daewee

GONG: Good.

STALLS: 7.6 m - outside; remainder - inside.

DRAW ADVANTAGE: None.

■ ALMOST flat, left-hand oval course; straight 8f course.

■ Course is near junction of A580 and M6. Newton station 2m. ADMISSION: On County Stand £7, International £10. Newton Station £5 (CAPS or Punters). Students half-price in Tattersalls Stand £7, International £10. Punters £5.

■ LEADING TRAINERS: J. Darby 39 winners from 117 runners (success rate 34.0%); J. Godden 24-12 (20.7%), B. Hills 23-26 (24%); H. Codd 22-54 (42.7%); J. Berry 19-33 (18%).

■ LEADING JOCKEYS: J. Darby 19 wins from 99 rides (success rate 19.2%); L. Dettori 18-10 (16.5%); K. Fallon 18-10 (16.5%); T. Sprake 15-14 (20.3%); R. Alford 15-9 (16%).

■ FAVOURITES: 222 wins in 644 races (34.5%).

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Badenoch 2 (D), Captain Logast (veteran, 40%).

STANLEY CASINOS RATED HANDICAP (CLASS B) £12,250 added 1m 4f

Penalty Value £8,072

Ratings

1. 60263 PERFECT PARADIGM (6) (map) Sheikh Mohamed/J. Godden 4.9 7.1. Detori 1.85

2. 14-300 BADENOCHE (17) (C) (9) Exon of the Lothians/P. Codd 4.9 5.5. T. Hills 2.117

3. 5221 RONKEY BROWN (18) (D) (Paul Melton) 6.9 6.2. A. Nichols 2.103

4. 804 ALCAZAR (22) (map) F. Malone, O. P. Smith 5.1. D. Stedman 2.105

5. 20225 GIVE ME A RING (7) (map) C. Thomas 5.0 5.5. D. P. McEvoy 2.104

6. 14-303 TARDEN (17) (C) (The Gingko Racing Partnership) K. Bailey 4.8 8.1. D. Holland 2.102

7. 6881 CARBURETTOR (18) (D) (Bacon-Ernest Holdings) J. Sauer 5.5 7.7. N. Collins 2.103

8. 2014 SHOUK (7) (C) (Freddy Stal Ltd) J. Curran 4.9 7.7. T. Sprake 2.102

9. 2162 RED RAMONA (18) (map) James & William Fletcher 3.8 5.5. T. Hills 2.105

10. 14-301 WEET FOR ME (2) (Weston Hastings & Stumpf) Ltd R. Hollinshead 3.8 5.5. J. Dettori 2.106

11. 54 HECKLE (22) (map) A. Weston 3.8 5.5. L. Chittenden 2.107

12. 51 KAROWNA (22) (map) H. Hobson Partnership 2.108 9.1. - declared -

BETTING: 5-2 Bielles, 9-2 Great Malvern, 11-2 Entwistle, 11-2 Cheltenham Colours, 10-1 Crown Stable, 14-1 Keweenaw.

FORM GUIDE

CROWN OF TREES: All-the-way Kempton winner from three-times second Secret Outfit (7). Has numerous big-race entries and should improve on that quite useful form.

MISTERBETHETTER: Smooth debut winner at Newcastle who was respectable length third to Tayl at York after (first two losses). Plotted hard so there may improve.

Biennando: Colt by Breeders' Cup winner Benil Ben and half-brother to couple of winners in France. Racing Post Trophy entry and yard has debutants winners.

WEET FOR ME: Warming out at Al Neash man. Yard not noted for debutants winners.

VERDONCT: Biennando is from a yard well capable of winning with a debutant but follow Racing Post Trophy entry CROWN OF TREES has the advantage of experience and, with improvement likely on the early useful form he showed in winning at Kempton, he is presented.

FORM GUIDE

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MISTERBETHETTER: Smooth debut winner at Newcastle who was respectable length third to Tayl at York after (first two losses). Plotted hard so there may improve.

Biennando: Colt by Breeders' Cup winner Benil Ben and half-brother to couple of winners in France. Racing Post Trophy entry and yard has debutants winners.

WEET FOR ME: Warming out at Al Neash man. Yard not noted for debutants winners.

VERDONCT: Biennando is from a yard well capable of winning with a debutant but follow Racing Post Trophy entry CROWN OF TREES has the advantage of experience and, with improvement likely on the early useful form he showed in winning at Kempton, he is presented.

Tomboy: Showed his form for a soft surface when winning Cork & Orrery Stakes at Royal Ascot and will be suited by any rain. Not entirely convincing on overall form, however.

ANDREWIEV: Impressive debut at Newmarket. Very good form and will be suited by any rain.

Arabian: Impressed in July Cup and should be the best of the bunch.

Entwistle: Most improved winner of July Cup at Newmarket, but suffered a setback last time. Impressed in July Cup and is a runner to beat.

Cheltenham Colours: Consistent and improving in July Cup and is a runner to beat.

Great Malvern: Took advantage of a good draw to win Stewards' Cup at Goodwood and has a good start again. Much more on his plate.

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Cheltenham Colours: Consistent and improving in July Cup and is a runner to beat.

Great Malvern: Took advantage of a good draw to win

NatWest Trophy final: Derbyshire's chances look slim in the face of Lancashire's overwhelming superiority

Red Rose ready for first flowering

LANCASHIRE'S HOPES of ending their season with three trophies begin at Lord's this morning, where they play Derbyshire in the final of the NatWest Trophy. As six-times winners of this competition the prospects of adding another look good for the Red Rose county. Indeed, in three previous meetings over 60 overs, they have never lost to Derbyshire, a trend unlikely to be bucked now unless a crucial toss is lost.

Captained by Wasim Akram, in perhaps his final season for the club, Lancashire have night on the perfect one-day team. Apart from batting that has depth as well as breadth, the bowling is a mixture of threat and parsimony.

Only complacency threatens their all-round superiority, though it is not



DEREK PRINGLE

likely to strike in front of a full house at Lord's, a place whose familiarity in recent years will intimidate them far less than their opponents.

Michael Atherton, providing his back is not giving him gyp, is an ideal

opener for this type of cricket. Unless Andrew Flintoff is used to pinch hit, he and John Crawley will look to build a platform over the first 40 overs. After that, the likes of Neil Fairbrother, picked once again for England's one-day side this winter, and Graham Lloyd, confident after his unbeaten double century against Derbyshire on Thursday, will inject some urgency.

Lacking only a left-arm spinner, Lancashire's bowling is variety itself. With Wasim, Peter Martin and Glenn Chapple all able to swing the ball, and Ian Austin able to seam it, Derbyshire's batsmen will want conditions to be as benign as possible, something September finals appear rarely able to provide. If it is flat, the off-spinner Gary Yates will be the man to peg back the scoring rate.

On the evidence of the past year, Derbyshire have barely enough bark, let alone bite, to live up to the status of underdogs. Indeed, if two divisions were a reality, rather than the fanciful notion of misguided marketing men, this is just the sort of potential mismatch it would be seeking to avoid.

Yet if the lengthy format of the NatWest usually favours the stronger side, the fickleness of the early autumn pitches means that Derbyshire, providing any early advantage does not go against them, can compete. After all, they beat Leicestershire in the semi-final away from home, a performance that owed as much to their strength of character as it did to their opponent's generosity.

However, collective belief will be

needed and since the intercine rows which rocked the club last season - they lost captain, coach and chairman, as well as Devon Malcolm and Chris Adams - they have emerged uncertainly like men from a tunnel.

The arrival of Michael Slater, the ebullient Australian, has helped the rebuilding process, as has the emergence of players like Matthew Cassar and the 19-year-old batsman Ben Spendlove. They, along with proven match-winners such as Dominic Cork and Phil DeFreitas, will be looking to stop the Lancastrian juggernaut and give their own patient spectators something to crow about.

As winners of the first NatWest Trophy - NatWest took over the sponsorship from Gillette in 1981 -

none will be keener to see Derbyshire prevail again than Kim Barnett. The sole survivor of that winning team still playing, Barnett has been a dedicated servant and his unique strokeplay on the walk could well provide the decisive innings.

And yet for all Barnett's nous, the key is probably Slater, despite a hasty return from Australia where he has been attending a training camp for the Commonwealth Games. If he can ensure Derbyshire a good start the potential of an erratic middle-order may be realised, and his early duels with Wasim and Co should make fascinating viewing.

The new ball offerings from Cork and DeFreitas, as well as the left-arm Kevin Dean, will also be vital. If they can disrupt Lancashire's game plan by taking early wickets

their mediocre back-up bowling may have a chance of remaining unexposed.

Despite Lancashire being overwhelming favourites, one-day cricket is notoriously fickle in its treatment of the top dogs and the contest may yet be a close one. The flipside of that, is that it could also be won or lost in the first hour of play.

For an early clue, simply watch the initial reactions of the team who wins the toss.

NATWEST TROPHY FINAL (Lord's): Lancashire (from left) A J Atherton, P. Cawthron, A. Flintoff, M. G. Yates, G. Lloyd, M. J. Slater, M. Cassar, W. K. Akram (captain), D. Austin, G. Chapple, P. J. Martin, G. Yates, M. Watkins, M. J. Chilton, R. J. Green

Derbyshire (from left) K. J. Barnett, M. J. Slater, R. M. Weston, G. Chapple, S. P. Spendlove, D. G. Martin (captain), D. Blackwell, K. M. Krisher (wicket-keeper), P. A. J. DeFreitas, V. P. Clarke, G. M. Roberts, S. J. Lacey, K. J. Dean

Umpires: K. E. Palmer & G. Sharp. Third umpire: B. Leadbeater.

Harsh words spur on Cork

DOMINIC CORK and his Derbyshire team are relishing another opportunity to prove the critics wrong today, having been written off before their NatWest quarter-final win against Surrey and the semi-final triumph over Leicestershire.

"I read a lot of people saying that it's a waste of time us turning up and I like that," said Cork, who has been re-appointed to lead Derbyshire's campaign next season. "That to me is great, because hopefully we'll prove a few people wrong."

Cork, whose side were even written off by the Scotland coach Jim Love prior to Derbyshire's seven-wicket, second-round victory in Edinburgh, used psychology to spur on his side by taunting them with the harsh words of the Surrey chief executive, Paul Sheldon, prior to the quarter-final at The Oval.

"The one thing I did with the lads before the game against Surrey was to hold a piece of paper up which said that Paul Sheldon was claiming they had drawn one of the weakest sides in the competition."

"I told them that if that didn't motivate them then nothing would. This was a bloke who had never played cricket and he was writing us off!"

Phil DeFreitas enters the fray against his former county having completed the transformation from young firebrand to elder statesman of the Derbyshire dressing-room.

The 32-year-old former England all-rounder would not have been the first choice as an example to younger players when he was first attracting notice both on and off the field in his formative years with Leicestershire.

Stories of dressing-room pranks, which made him less than popular with his Grace Road team-mates, plus rumours of more than one pane of glass being shattered in outbreaks of frustration, gave DeFreitas an unwarranted reputation as a troublesome character.

But, as he completes his fifth season with Derbyshire, who were rocked by internal strife throughout last season, he has emerged as something of a father figure for promising youngsters such as Robin Weston and Ben Spendlove.

"I enjoy helping the younger players," DeFreitas said. "When I first started, people called me the bad boy of cricket because of the things I got up to. If I can help younger players through that period of their career I feel pleased about doing that."

"That is something I felt I needed when I was a bit younger. I just needed talking to properly and someone guiding me and telling me what I should be doing."



Glen Chapple: 'You know that when you have done it once you can do it again. Whether it will happen again on such a big stage is another matter'

Barry Greenwood

Showtime for Chapple the destroyer

WHEN MOST of his Lancashire team-mates are in Australia, Bangladesh or South Africa and Zimbabwe this winter, the man who recent experience says is the country's most likely matchwinner in the NatWest Trophy final today will be in Burnley.

Glen Chapple could be excused for feeling a little bit like the odd man out, the stay-at-home Cinderella, at Old Trafford this week. No less than eight of his team-mates - including a couple studiously ignored for years

- who will be on duty against Derbyshire at Lord's are in one of England's various tour parties. But Chapple, Lancashire's leading wicket-taker in Championship cricket this summer, as well as the destroyer of Essex in the final final exactly two years ago, was conspicuous by his absence when the squads were named.

He is philosophical about his

winter at home. "It's not the biggest disappointment," he insists. "I've been on two England A tours and done well. They probably think that now it's going to do a young player more good."

At 24, Chapple is not exactly an old player. "But just because I was on the fringe for England at 21, that doesn't mean I'm going to get picked. There's only 11 people can play, but if you get it all together at the right time you've got a chance," Chapple says.

And two years ago, of course, Glen Chapple famously got it all together at Lord's. He was close to unplayable that day, taking 6 for 18 as Essex were mugged for 57. "I've had a few days like that, but there's a bit of a difference when you do it in a final at Lord's rather than a cold, wet day in Durham."

Contrary to the popular mythology of late season finals, Chapple,

who had not always been sure of his place that season ahead of Steve Elworthy, did not get much obvious assistance from the elements that day. "It was cloudy in the morning and it swung around for the Essex bowlers," he recalls. "Then the sun came out and I thought: 'This could be hard work.'

It turned out to be more like pure pleasure. "A big cloud came over and it was the atmosphere more than the pitch that gave me any help. That was a great day but this is a new game and I've got to put all that to the back of my mind and get on with doing the job."

England's forgotten man has the chance to climb back in the frame at Lord's today. By Dave Hadfield

You know that, when you've done it once, you can do it again. Whether it will happen again on such a big stage in the final of a competition is another matter."

This season Chapple has shown just as good an appetite for the day-to-day treadmill of the county Championship as he did two years ago for cup final scalps. His 40-plus wickets at around 20 apiece represent a bigger contribution to the cause than Peter Martin's haul, or Ian Austin's or even Wasim Akram's. Coming after a disappointing, injury-affected season last year, it emphasizes that he is a player back on song.

And, when you are chasing three trophies, you need plenty of those, but Chapple says that he and his team-mates are feeling little strain as a result of fighting on three fronts.

"We are dealing with it quite well. No one seems too tired. Maybe it's because we've had a lot of rain-affected games. We haven't played all that much cricket, but we've still won a lot of games in run chases."

"Of course, the Championship is special because we haven't won it for such a long time, but we're treating each competition as equal priorities. You can't put any trophy above any other trophy."

That makes for a uniquely pressurised last month of the season, with the NatWest final closely followed by the two AXA League games that could give them that title. Then there is barely time for a sharp intake of breath before the two

matches that could give them the Britannic Assurance Championship.

After all that, the prospect of a quiet winter in Burnley does not seem too bad at all. Chapple says: "There might be an offer to play cricket somewhere, but I'm not sure that if I went away it would do me much good. I stayed at home last year and I think that's helped to keep me fresh this season. Besides, we start pre-season training at the start of December."

Not much time, then, for speculating on what might have been in foreign parts. And, as he says, it is important to push past glories firmly to the back of the mind and concentrate on the job in hand.

Still, when Chapple gets the ball on Saturday, he will know that he is back in the setting where devastating bowling gets you noticed - and that he has already proved that he is capable of producing exactly that.



The final battle has yet to be fought.

Saturday September 5th, 0-00. A full-scale invasion has begun. Army of fans, legal to Derbyshire and Lancashire are converging on Lord's Cricket Ground to witness the final conflict of the NatWest Trophy.

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The new season: After a summer of discontent, a new unity of purpose is needed if the professional era is to succeed

Time to rumble after the grumbles

BY DAVID LLEWELLYN

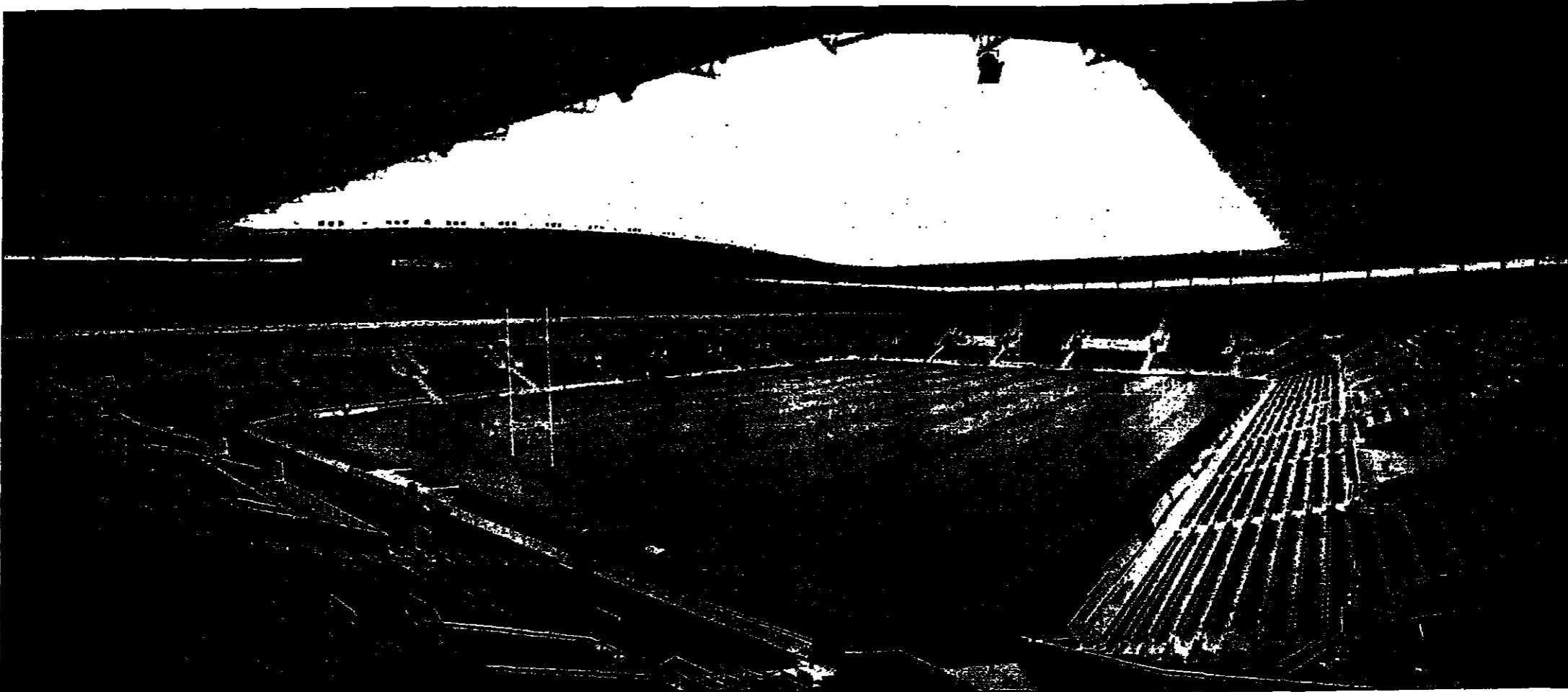
SO FINALLY the talking has to stop, albeit temporarily, to make way for the rude interruption of action on the field. The summer of discontent may be grumbling and rumbling its way into autumn, but the season that really matters begins officially today – well, for almost everyone.

There is an enlarged Allied Dunbar Premiership, the preliminary round of the Tetley's Bitter Cup involving 64 hopefuls and a couple of Anglo-Welsh matches, which have not actually been officially sanctioned but are going ahead anyway, to launch what threatens to be a stormy and crammed season, but one with a great deal of potential for stirring exploits.

And while the arguments about control of the game, its players and its lucrative deals may be the same, thankfully there are some changes of personnel and scene around the clubs. Alain Penaud and Jeremy Thomson have popped up at Saracens, ostensibly to step into the shoes of two legends, Michael Lyman and Philippe Sella, no doubt they will cut their own swathes through the English club game.

Harlequins will finally have the awesome Zinzan Brooke in one of their famous shirts. He has a three-fold challenge as player, captain and coach. David Daniaciq has joined Northampton from Pau, while the Saints also made potentially the best signing of the summer when they bought Pat Lam from the champions, Newcastle. The Australian Pat Howard has entered the Tigers' den at Leicester along with the speedy Canadian wing, Dave Lougheed.

As for the venues, Newcastle, who have themselves switched their big games from Kingston Park to the Gateshead Stadium, begin their defence at Richmond's new base. Richmond are still in the Thames catchment area, just some 35 miles upstream from the inadequate Athletic Ground, where they are sharing the purpose-built, impressive



Richmond will play host to the champions Newcastle today at the impressive new purpose-built Madejski Stadium they share with Reading Football Club

David Ashdown

Madejski Stadium with Reading Football Club.

London Scottish begin their return to the top flight on new turf as well. Having shared the Athletic Ground with the aforementioned Richmond for a long time, they have moved down the A316 to Harlequins' Stoop Memorial Ground in Twickenham and open proceedings against re-named Manchester Sale.

West Hartlepool, who take part in one of the controversial Anglo-Welsh clashes this weekend when they travel to Swansea, must wait until next week before trying out Victoria

Park, the home of the town's football club. It is an odd coincidence that two of the Allied Dunbar Premiership One's new boys should be engaged in activities which, while not completely illegal, certainly do not have the approval of the Rugby Football Union, the Welsh Rugby Union or the International Board. Perhaps the senior members of the top division knew something.

Whatever, Bedford must run the gauntlet of being the first English side to entertain one of the two disaffected Welsh clubs when Cardiff turn up at Goldington Road. Neither

of these cross-border matches has Union approved match officials, although presumably the referees who do take charge will not be referred to as scab labour. These outlawed fixtures will take place every weekend that there is a scheduled Premiership programme, reducing the number of official fixtures by one.

The England coach, Clive Woodward, is going to be a busy man as he enters the final stages of preparations for next year's World Cup. The first thing he has to do is to ensure that those unfortunate who went on the tour to hell when Eng-

land lost all four Tests in the southern hemisphere in the summer have not been scarred for life. He also has to make sure that the crooks who missed the tortuous trip because of their chronic injuries and ailments have all recovered. Then he has to prepare everyone for a gruelling schedule beginning with two World Cup qualification matches against the Netherlands and Italy in November, followed by one-off Tests against Australia and South Africa before Christmas.

It is no less strenuous for the other home countries. Altogether

there are 12 Tests involving Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England before the festive season. Wales then start the year with a match against the fierce Western Samoans – and that is followed by the Five Nations.

The mass withdrawal of labour from the European Cup by the English clubs is possibly a blessing in disguise for the often over-worked players. At least they will not be under quite such severe pressure to perform at the very top level week-in, week-out.

Everyone seems to be pulling in different directions, though. Some

thing has been missing in the disreputable scrabble that has accompanied professionalism. Something fundamental to the game. A unity of purpose.

No single component of the global network is greater than its whole. No individual, however justified their arguments, can be bigger than the collective. Oh for the days when all players had to worry about was burn-out. Right now there are fires burning within the game that are threatening more than scorched earth. It is time to put the union back in rugby.

Yates ready for new chapter

THE ENGLAND prop Kevin Yates begins his rugby rehabilitation today after serving a six-month ban for a biting incident that shocked rugby. But Yates, on the Bath bench for the visit of Wasps, admits: "There is no point in me being bitten off it."

Despite denying the allegation, Yates was found guilty by a Rugby Football Union disciplinary board of biting the ear of the London Scottish flanker Simon Fenn during a Tetley's Bitter Cup tie last January.

"People are always going to talk about it, and I am always going to be stuck with it," said the 25-year-old front row. "But I want to put the whole business behind me and get back playing rugby."

The Leicester manager, Dean Richards, has paid the England utility back Austin Healey a glowing compliment as the Tigers prepare to greet Harlequins, now led by the former All Black Zinzan Brooke.

By his own admission, Leicestershire's scrum-half Healey didn't enjoy life under the Bob Dwyer regime at Welford Road, but appears to have found new enthusiasm. "He's got outstanding ability," Richards said, "he is working extremely hard and it's almost as if we have seen a totally different Austin during pre-season."

John Mitchell, the Sale coach, admits he is worried about the trip to Harlequins' Stoop Memorial Ground, where newly-promoted London Scottish now play. "We don't know a lot about them," he said. "They will be really up for their first game at home."

Away from Premiership action, rebel clubs Cardiff and Swansea continue life in exile after quitting the Welsh Premier Division. A proposed series of unsanctioned friendlies kick off with Cardiff's visit to Bedford, whose players yesterday voted against strike action over unpaid wages and Swansies hosting West Hartlepool at St Helens.

The row at Bedford centres on Frank Warren, the club chairman and boxing promoter, delaying salary payments by two weeks, causing players to threaten a playing boycott ahead of today's game.

Warren has threatened to sack outspoken players, even though they withdrew their threat to strike. "Reports that players are refusing to play are untrue," Warren said. "If any player has made such ill-advised comments, with the potential adverse effect on the gate and income for that game, then we will have to consider whether he has any future at the club."

HOW THEY LINE UP IN THE ALLIED DUNBAR PREMIERSHIP DIVISION ONE

BATH

European Champions they may be, but this season they will have to concentrate on the domestic League and Cup because English clubs turned their back on Europe. Dan Leyland was missed for the latter half of last season, and the addition of former All Black Jon Preston, the utility half-back, should prove incisive.

Head coach: Andy Robinson
Captain: Richard Webster
Last season: 3rd
In: Kevin Maggs (Bristol), Steve Borthwick (Preston Grasshoppers), Jon Preston (Wellington, NZ), Jim Fallon (Richmond), Gareth Cooper (Pencoed), Ben Sturham (Saracens). Out: Rocky Pellow (Exeter), James Loftus (Leicester), Kevin Isimba (Zimbabwe), Frenchman (Munster), German Laines (released, Argentina), Gary French (London Welsh), Charlie Harrison, Joe Evans (both Bedford), Benoit Durand (released, France), Simon Johnson (Munster), Brian Cusack (Richmond).

BEDFORD

A clutch of exciting new signings, including the ex-Bath man Joe Ewens, a centre who should beef up the backs. No Mike Rayer – Mr Reliable with the boot – at full-back though, following his courtroom victory to gain his release and enable him to return to Wales. A cracking back row featuring the explosive Junior Paramore.

Director of Rugby: Geoff Cooke
Captain: Paul Turner (tbc)
Last season: Promoted as Division II champions

In: Virgil Hardland, Danny Zalzam (both Coventry), Charlie Harrison, Joe Ewens (both Bath), Rob Ashton, Richard Elliott (both Camb Uni), Andy Duke (Newbury), Darren O'Connor, Jamie Coddie (both Worcester), Michael McIlroy (Cardiff), Justin Cullen (Blackheath), Justin Cullen (released, NZ), Dave Hincks (Bristol), Sean Plford (released, SA), Richard Stone (West Hartlepool), Richard Kirke (London Irish).

GLOUCESTER

One of the shrewdest signings of the summer could turn out to be former All Black Simon Mannix from Sale, but he will be in contention for the stand-off spot with English-qualified Mark Mapleton. The lock Rob Ridder will have the added confidence of England caps while Phil Vickery is another member of an aggressive young pack.

Director of Rugby: Richard Hill
Captain: Dave Sims
Last season: 6th
In: Simon Mannix (Sale), Craig Gwynn (Leeds), Rafael Saint-Amand, Andrew Gibbs (both Romans, France), Alex Morris (Melrose), Martin Roberts (Moseley).



Zinzan Brooke: Harlequins' new coach, captain and No 8

HARLEQUINS

When you have rugby's equivalent of Superman as your coach, captain and No 8, as have Quins with the All Black legend Zinzan Brooke, it has to be said that you have a distinct advantage. With players of the calibre of Therry Lacoux and John Schuster to use the possession, Harlequins are likely to be serious contenders for honours.

Director of Rugby: John Gallagher
Captain: Zinzan Brooke
Last season: 10th
In: John Gallagher, John Schuster, Colin Ridgeway (all Blackheath), Zinzan Brooke (Auckland, NZ), Garrick Morgan (Queensland, Australia), Tom Murphy (Cambridge Univ), Vaughan Goings (Valley, Hong Kong), David Officer (Heriot's FP), Garry Halpin (London Irish), David Barnes (Newcastle), Owen Will Carling (retired), Laurent Cabannes (Richmond), Gareth Alison (Castres), Spencer Bromley, Laurent Belliotti (both released, Italy), Luke Gross (Rowing), Paul Delaney (retired), Rob Hitchingham (Wakefield), Adam Jackson (London Welsh), Tom Jankovich (SA), Mark Kelly (Bracknell), Courtney Smith (Canada).

LEICESTER

The introduction of Wallaby Pat Howard into the midfield to make better use of the talents of Will Greenwood, Tim Simpson et al should see some more cohesive performances. The pack invariably do their bit and with the likes of England flanker Neil Back linking in his brilliant fashion with Joe Stranks, expect fireworks.

Director of Rugby: Geoff Cooke
Captain: Paul Turner
Last season: Promoted as Division II champions

In: Virgil Hardland, Danny Zalzam (both Coventry), Charlie Harrison, Joe Ewens (both Bath), Rob Ashton, Richard Elliott (both Camb Uni), Andy Duke (Newbury), Darren O'Connor, Jamie Coddie (both Worcester), Michael McIlroy (Cardiff), Justin Cullen (Blackheath), Justin Cullen (released, NZ), Dave Hincks (Bristol), Sean Plford (released, SA), Richard Stone (West Hartlepool), Richard Kirke (London Irish).

LONDON IRISH

Frankly an unknown quantity. Much will depend on how quickly they gel. With 26 of last year's squad now scattered to the four winds and the Emerald Isle, Dick Best and his former Harlequin right-hand man Andy Keast will have their work cut out. But there is some serious southern hemisphere action at Sunbury, or on its way.

Director of Rugby: Dick Best
Assistant: Andy Keast
Captain: Conor O'Shea
Last season: 11th – survived play-offs, again

In: Robin Hardwick, James Brown (both Coventry), Mike Worsley (Bristol), Steve Bachop, Jarrod Cunningham (both Wellington, NZ), Michael Howe (Bay of Plenty, NZ), Rob Gallagher (Manly Australia), Simon Berridge, Jake Boer (Western Province, SA), Kevin Pitt, Ryan Strudwick (both Natal, SA), Pieter Rogers (Gauteng Lions, SA), Kris Fullman (Bristol), Richard Kirke (Bedford), Robert Todd (London Scottish), Matt Jones (Moseley). Out: A total of 26 departures, among whom were Liam Mooney, Tony Redmond (both Blackheath), Jeremy Davidson, Ken O'Connell (both Castres), Gabriel Fulcher (Lansdowne), Garry Halpin (Harlequins), Niall Hogan (unattached), David Humphreys, Justin Fitzpatrick, Mark McCall (all Durban), Philip Graves (West Hartlepool), Dave Merlin (Blackheath), Andy Gallagher (Rugby Lions), Shem Tatupu (Wasps).

LONDON SCOTTISH

A new ground, The Stoop, which will share with Quins and some heavyweight southern hemisphere power players up front – notably the near 20-stone Aussie, Damien Cummins, at hooker – promise much. Free State stand-off Jannie de Beer is no lightweight talent and Simon Holmes on the flank is always a danger.

Director of Rugby: John Steele
Captain: tbc
Last season: Promoted after beating Bristol in play-offs

In: Simon Binn, Guy Easterby (Richmond), Jamie de Beer (Free State, SA), Matt Dixon (NSW, Australia), Maurice Fitzgerald (Newcastle), Nick Walker (Cambridge Univ).

Director of Rugby: John Kingston
Captain: Ben Clarke
Last season: 5th
In: Laurent Cabannes (Harlequins), Andy Beazley (Exeter), Brian Cusack (Bath), Matt Dixon (NSW, Australia), Maurice Fitzgerald (Newcastle), Nick Walker (Cambridge Univ).

Director of Rugby: John Kingston
Captain: Ben Clarke
Last season: 5th
In: Laurent Cabannes (Harlequins), Andy Beazley (Exeter), Brian Cusack (Bath), Matt Dixon (NSW, Australia), Maurice Fitzgerald (Newcastle), Nick Walker (Cambridge Univ).

MANCHESTER SALE

No manm, but maybe that is just as well. Tom Beirn, Pat Sanders and Joe Bayliss will have learned much from their England experience of the summer. David Rees and Beirn should be potent out wide and in Dion O'Cuinneagain's break in this country, if not the world.

Director of Rugby: John Mitchell
Assistant coach: Graham Dave (forwards)

Captain: Jim Mallender
Last season: 7th

In: Jon Machacek (Newport), Barry-Jon Matthe (Castford – joins in January 1998).

Out: Michael Lynagh, Philippe Sella (both retired), Mark Burrow (Wakefield), Ben Sturham (Bath), Tony Copsey (Lancell).

Director of Rugby: John Mitchell
Captain: Ben Clarke
Last season: 5th
In: Kevin Whitley (Canada), Jim Fallon (Natal, SA), Tony Coker (ACT, Australia), Alain Peard (Brive), Jeremy Thompson (Natal, SA Africa).

Out: Michael Lynagh, Philippe Sella (both retired), Mark Burrow (Wakefield), Ben Sturham (Bath), Tony Copsey (Lancell).

NEWCASTLE

How much will Pat Lam be missed? No amount of brave noise from the management can get away from the fact that Lam should be a major factor in their title challenge. It is time for Jonny Wilkinson to be allowed to flourish although, with Andrew continuing at stand-off, another slot further out beckons the talented youngster.

Director of Rugby: Rob Andrew
Captain: Steve Bates
Last season: Champions

In: Marius Hurter (Western Province, SA), Peter Masse (Moseley), Ian Pfeiffer (Wharfedale), Michael Wood (West Hartlepool).

Director of Rugby: Nigel Melville
Captain: Rob Smith
Last season: 12th (bottom)

In: Glyn Anderson (unsigned), David Burchell, Campbell Rae (both led-forest), Geoff Wappett (Bladon), Neil Smith (Liverpool St. Helens).

Director of Rugby: Nigel Melville
Captain: Rob Smith
Last season: 12th (bottom)

In: Glyn Anderson (unsigned), David Burchell, Campbell Rae (both led-forest), Geoff Wappett (Bladon), Neil Smith (Liverpool St. Helens).

NORTHAMPTON

The arrival of Pat Lam will inject dynamism into the forwards, not that they have been short of that commodity in the past. Matt Dawson matured into a fine scrum-half on England's Tour to Hell in the summer. Tim Rodber should be fit and, with Paul Grayson's reliable boot, should be among the challengers for honours.

Director of Rugby: Ian McGeechan

Captain: Paul Larkin

Last season: 8th

In: Robin Hardwick, James Brown (both Coventry), Mike Worsley (Bristol), Steve Bachop, Jarrod Cunningham (both Wellington, NZ), Michael Howe (Bay of Plenty, NZ), Rob Gallagher (Manly Australia), Simon Berridge, Jake Boer (Western Province, SA), Kevin Pitt, Ryan Strudwick (both Natal, SA), Pieter Rogers (Gauteng Lions, SA), Kris Fullman (Bristol), Richard Kirke (Bedford), Robert Todd (London Scottish), Matt Jones (Moseley).

Out: Gregor Townsend (Bristol), Jonathan Bell, Allan Clarke (both Darlington), Philip Graves (West Hartlepool), Dave Merlin (Blackheath), Andy Gallagher (Rugby Lions), Shem Tatupu (Wasps).

Director of Rugby: Mike Brewer

Captain: Tu Nuvalila

Last season: Promoted as runners-up in Division Two

In: Richard Stone (Bedford), Philip Graves (Northampton), Bill Fuller (Leicester), Peter Tangjiao (Northland, NZ), JJ van der Esch (Dundee HSSP).

Out: Michael Wood (Newcastle), Dave Mitchell, Phil Harvey (both Darlington), Matt Jones (London Irish).

RICHMOND

Another club with a new home, this one up-river, deep in the Thames valley at Reading. Laurent Cabannes had joined and, provided he recovers from his injury, he should revitalise the forays upfield. The Argentinian scrum-half Agustin Pichot should also be crucial, as will the brilliant Allan Bateman in the centre.

Director of Rugby: John Kingston

Captain:

Super Lam on another planet

A prodigious rugby talent has landed at Northampton and the rest of the élite should be nervous. By David Llewellyn

FRANKLIN'S GARDENS is the place to be this season. However good a side Northampton had before, this year they promise to be something special. The signing of the summer, possibly of the year, means that Saints fans will be treated to one of the most explosive and extraordinary talents operating in rugby at the moment.

Unfortunately, their first glimpse of Pat Lam, the sport's equivalent of Superman, will be very restricted. First, because Saints' opening match of the season is away to Saracens at Watford tomorrow; second, because Lam flies off almost immediately to the southern hemisphere to take part in Western Samoa's qualifying campaign against Tonga, Fiji and Australia over the next three weeks.

There is no doubt he will be missed, although Harlequins and Leicester will be mightily relieved since his time away coincides with their Premiership matches against Northampton.

Lam is a back-row player of prodigious talent, power and pace. Saints know just how fortunate they are to have him. He had looked well settled in the North-East, helping Newcastle, first to promotion the season before last, then to the Premiership One Championship last year.

His efforts earned him accolades from every walk of rugby life yet, in July, while he was away touring New Zealand with Western Samoa, he learned that Newcastle were about to sell him.

"I was staggered," says Lam, who will be 30 later this month. "Left to go on tour fully expecting that my agent and the club would be negotiating a new three-year contract at Newcastle. I just wanted some security."

But Rob Andrew (Newcastle's director of rugby) reckoned it was an offer I could not refuse, and anyway he explained to me that they could not match Northampton's offer. When Rob then told me that they needed a tight-head prop – they subsequently signed Marcus Hurter from Western Province – I knew I had little choice.

"It was a bit annoying though, because I wasn't even in the country when it was being done. And it was made to look as if I had gone for the money, but that is not the case."

"I am not in this game for the money. I want a quality of life for my family. I have a wife and three children to consider as well and they had all settled down really well in Newcastle, a place we all liked from the outset and we had a house ready to buy. I think one of the

reasons I played so well up there was because my wife and family were so happy there."

Reluctantly at first, Lam headed south, leaving his wife, Stephanie, and the children in the north-east until November. "The deal here with Northampton is a lot better than at Newcastle," he says, "and rugby-wise I know I am in the right place. Ian McGeechan's style of rugby suits me."

"It is up to me to try to fit into the new style down here. At Newcastle they restricted my natural game, which is OK. I'm a team man and I want to do what is best for everyone, but I do believe we could have been a bit more expansive. Here 'Geech' has given me more of a free rein and I am really enjoying it."

Lam, who played in the 1991 and 1995 World Cup tournaments each time, helping Western Samoa to the quarter-finals, retains many fond memories of his two years with Newcastle.

"The back three of Dean Ryan, Richard Arnold and I played well off each other. Arnold is a great grafter on the floor; Ryan took the hard yards going forward and I was able to take the ball on. In fact, I called Richard 'Guts' and he called me 'Glory' because of the difference in our roles."

"With Northampton I have again been taken on as part of a complementary unit. Here Budge Pountney fills Arnold's role, Tim Rodber is more of a Dean Ryan. I can play off both of them."

"At Northampton under Ian McGeechan the description loose forward is a licence to thrill it seems to me. Of course you have to remain disciplined and have the right vision. There is no point in being expansive when it is inappropriate. We just have to work as a unit. And we are slowly learning each other's strengths and weaknesses."

McGeechan thinks the process is a little faster than that. He is still amazed that Lam fell into their lap. "I think most people were surprised that Newcastle were prepared to transfer him, but once we knew that was the case we didn't waste any time. And since Pat has arrived here he has been tremendous. His impact in training has been colossal."

"He is a quality player. He thinks about the game. He has tremendous vision and his timing is awesome. He hits lines very late and in tight situations it is almost as if he develops a sixth sense under the pressure. He seems to know instinctively where the space is going to be or the advantage is to be gained."

Lam has another distinct advantage over mortal rugby players: his physical approach to the game. Invariably when he is being tackled the first opponent, or three, will bounce off him. It is as if he is running through them, rather like in karate when you have to look beyond or through what you are going to hit because that is where your hand is going to end up. So it is with Lam, ex-

cept that it is not his fist making the blow, but his body.

"There was a scientific study made in New Zealand recently and it claimed that Polynesians' muscles were very different from Europeans."

Lam says:

"Our muscles are harder for some genetic reason. And if you went to a secondary school in New Zealand you would see that Polynesian

Redgrave four head the quest for medals

ROWING

BY HUGH MATHESON

THE BRITISH Rowing Team has grounds for some jittery preparation as it waits today for tomorrow's opening of the World Championships at the Chorweiler course in the suburbs of Cologne, Germany. This year the challenge is to live up to the very high performance and expectations raised by the record total of eight championship medals won last year.

For the last 14 years the best chance of a gold medal has rested on the crew with Steven Redgrave. This time, as in France a year ago, the coxless four with his partner throughout the 1990s, Matt Pinsent, and the two freshman world champions, James Cracknell and Tim Foster, is the vehicle closest to a banker in the increasingly tough World Championship competition.

The coxless four trained with the rest of the team since Lucerne in mid-July, first at high altitude in Silvretta, Austria, and latterly at Varese in northern Italy. Jürgen Grobler, the former east German, who, as men's chief coach, has taken personal care of Redgrave and Pinsent since coming to Britain in January 1991, claims they are now faster than last year.

The four suffered its only defeat in Munich in June, when Foster was absent with injury, and did not reappear until Henley, when it beat the recently re-formed Atlanta Olympic champions and repeated the feat with a stunning victory in Lucerne a week later. Unless a wholly new four of exceptional talent has been drafted into the event in the last month, the Union flag should get another airing over Redgrave's peripatetic bulks at lunchtime on Sunday week. But, there is no room at the top for the smallest hiccup and nothing will be taken for granted by this formidable professional crew.

The men's eight has been restructured as thoroughly as the Russian national debt and has only three survivors from the 1997 fourth-place crew. Louis Attrill is now at stroke, with Richard Hamilton behind him at seven.

The crew is looking technically proficient and has been going well enough to get under 5 minutes 30 seconds for the 2000-metre course in flat conditions, which will be necessary to win a medal here.

The men's coxed four has only Dan Johnson, in as a substitute for Toby Garbett, surviving from the crew which won bronze last year and has had disrupted training, but as a non-Olympic event with 12 entries of little-known form almost any result is possible.

The men's pair of Fred Scalliet and Steve Williams were eighth-ranked in the April

trials in Britain but gained enough World Cup points through the season for the sectors to pick them to race in an extended field of 21 entries with no obvious stars.

In the single scull Greg Seale has had the kind of poor season which would push anyone else into retirement. Similarly Peter Haining in the lightweight single has had a poor preparation in comparison to his record three years from 1993 as champion but is going well and talking as confidently as ever of his prospects. In this non-Olympic event he may find the competition has eased in the past two years.

Gum Batten in the Women's single never really took off this summer and remains stuck somewhere toward the back of the final in fifth or sixth place.

Unless she can make a breakthrough here to the medals she will have to face up to whether the best use of her talent for Sydney will be in a bigger boat like the Women's eight, which has looked under-powered in a much harder field this season, and which may struggle to get more than a place in the final here.

Mike Spracklen, the women's chief coach, has scratched the coxless four which won the non-Olympic event last year to concentrate on the eight, acknowledging the harsher competition.

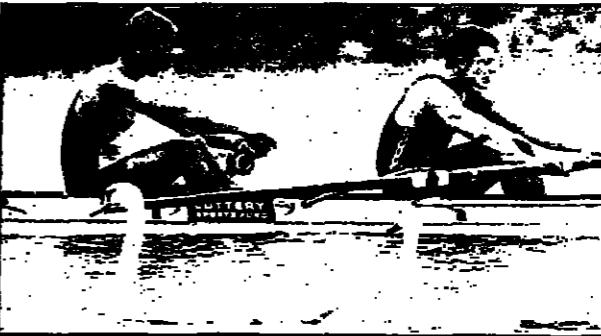
The two leading boats, the coxed pair and double scull, have both had good preparation and expect to go well. Dot Blackie, in the pair with Cath Bishop, missed the final last year when a medal seemed a certainty and will be deeply anxious to prove that their World Cup overall victory was deserved in spite of a dip into fourth place in Lucerne.

The double scull of Miriam Batten and Gillian Lindsay raced only once in the summer at Hazewinkel, but are now back in the sort of form which took them to silver a year ago.

The Women's team won only isolated medals in open weight events in the years of eastern European dominance of the sport and in the early nineties allowed the mantle to go first to the Canadians and then to the Australians. Three medals in Aiguebelette proved that it is possible with the right preparation for the British to compete with the best and it is vital this year that the momentum is maintained to give them a proper take off point for Sydney.

The lightweight men are led by the eight which has stayed ahead of the European field, but it is not an Olympic event, and the double sculls and four which have Sydney as the target, have each found the going tough this season and will be pleased with a place in the final.

The lightweight women's double scull, with Tracy Langlands and Jane Hall, have an outside chance of a medal.



Oarsmen brush with Cologe's wildlife as they prepare for the World Championships

Blackmail, guilt, suicide and a hint of crocodile tears



CHRIS MAUME
SPORT ON TV

with a considerably lesser talent, and from their mother, Pearl Powell, who dumped them in a Barnardo's home then farmed them out to foster

parents, there was a heady whiff of self-justification.

Powell abandoned her sons, she said, because she didn't have the resources to look after them, and she still seems to believe that wherewithal is more important than a mother's love. John suffered the same deprivation, of course, and didn't go off the rails, but then he didn't have to deal with being gay in a rampantly heterosexual subculture, and nor did he have prodigious early success to go to his head (or indeed the guilt or confusion associated with being a homosexual born-again Christian).

Justin was my shining light... my strength, my inspiration," John said. But when his brother came out in 1990 he

effectively disowned him, saying, "He'll have to suffer the consequences... I wouldn't want to get changed in his vicinity" – a remark he now regrets. But still Justin became "a liability to the family", and his waywardness was chronicled in detail by John. Without wishing to tread on anyone's grief I had a distinct feeling at the end of the film, as John said "I miss my brother", that he was doing his best to squeeze out a few tears for the camera. He didn't quite succeed, and looked instead as if he was about to sneeze. "I wish that I was more of a good son, brother, uncle, friend," Justin said in his suicide note. "But I tried my best. This seems to be a really hard world. I hope the Jesus

I love welcomes me home." If

he probably will.

Over on satellite the football soap, *Dream Team* (Sky One, Tuesday, Thursday), is back. Hartlepool United narrowly escaped relegation last season, and in the first episode of the new series they beat Spurs 3-0 to occupy the traditional no-hoper's early season slot at the top of the table.

There's a new chairman, the local dirty-dealer Jerry Block (played by Michael Melfi, who, my mum informs me, was the landlord of the Queen Vic in *Eastenders* immediately after Dirty Den, before being bumped off). As he looks round the ground before the Spurs game, he turns to his

factotum and asks him: "What do you see down there?" "The penalty area?" the underling ventures. "I see a block of luxury flats. I see profits," the scheming chairman corrects.

At this point he should have hung back his cape and twirled fendifly with his moustache, and indeed the plot took a turn for the melodramatic when a £50,000 kickback for a local councillor fell – literally – into the arms of the Scally apprentice, Billy, in a nightclubs toilet cubicle (it would take too long to explain the mistaken-identity plot mechanics, but the incident does give rise to the best line in the first two episodes, where the chairman says: "For all I know it was George Michael in there").

The first series' award-winning formula is adhered to – a fast-moving plot with short scenes and plenty of strands: there's the striker's wife bringing home a dark secret from Turkey, where hubby's on loan to Galatasaray, for example, and the chairman's comely wife, whose interest in football, the publicity blurbs promises, will extend in future episodes to attempting to bed as many of the first team as is humanly possible. It has to be said that sex is shoehorned into the plot as often as is humanly possible – a shower scene with the young education officer, Helen, is particularly gratuitous – but then I've always thought sex and football go well together ever

since coming home one Saturday night to find my flatmates coupling on the living room floor while watching *Match of the Day*.

The quality of any soap lies not so much in the narrative as the strength of the characters and by this criterium, *Dream Team* easily passes muster. My mum watches all the terrestrial soaps, so she knows the real thing when she sees it, and when I played her the tape of the first two episodes she was straight into it, despite being left cold by football (the only game she ever watched was the 1986 World Cup final). Now she's annoyed because she hasn't got a dish and she's hooked on Hartlepool.

THE SWEeper

BY CLIVE WHITE AND NICK HARRIS

Gullit homes in on Netherlands

RUUD GULLIT has backtracked on the idea of finding a permanent home in the north-east, some may say wisely given last weekend's ignominious start to his Geordie career. The former Sloane Ranger has more or less admitted that he intends to commute from the Netherlands. Presumably, when he said he intended to live "as close to the city centre as possible", he meant Amsterdam, Newcastle.

However, the north-east press have persisted this week with stories about his house hunting activities on Tyneside with girlfriend Estelle - the niece of Johanna Cruyff - and baby daughter, Joelle. If he does eventually put down roots in the area he will be the first Newcastle manager to do so since Ossie Ardiles. Kevin Keegan bought a place on Sir John Hall's Wyvyan Estate, which is about 40 miles outside Newcastle, while Kenny Dalglish moved to Durham after commuting for a time from Southport.

Gullit and Estelle are said to be looking at houses in the same Jesmond area where Ardiles lived. One hopes the property is of a more solid construction than that of Ardiles. Two days before the Argentinian was served his P45, the disgraced director Douglas Hall addressed the press following a 5-2 defeat at Oxford and said: "Ossie's job is as safe as houses".

AT LEAST Gullit was only put through the wringer once at the weekend, unlike Magpies' fan Chris Douglas, who discovered that his season ticket, like his team, had been mangled by a turbo charged machine - in his case, his washer. A simple case of a replacement ticket, one would have thought. Not likely. The 20-year-old has been told he must wait a month for a replacement and pay for individual tickets in the meantime with the promise of only a 50 per cent refund on his £90 outlay. Exploration of Newcastle fans? Never. "It's not

just a case of issuing him with a new ticket," said club spokesman Graham Courtney. "We have to change all the computer records. To be fair, it's actually quite an advanced job." Not unlike attempting to lead the Magpies to a win, then.

THERE MAY be only one Rush as far as Liverpool and Wrexham are concerned, but in the 1992 FA Cup final there were two of them and the only one who mattered in the north-east in those days was Sunderland's - namely David Rush. A Wembley appearance may have been a regular high point for Ian but for David - no relation - it represented a mountaintop from which he was to fall with disastrous consequences.

SONG SHEET

From the Sheffield United terraces

"You fill up my senses
Like a garden of roses,
Like patches of woodland,
Like a good pinch of snuff,
Like a night out in Sheffield
Like a greasy chip butty,
Sheffield United".

Tune: Annie's Song

Even in these days of astronomical earnings, his decline serves as a warning to the young. "At that time I thought I was untouchable, I was a star on my own doorstep," he said.

"I didn't think about security - I just blew the lot. People filled my head with rubbish, they had me convinced I would become a superstar". Six years after that day out at Wembley, Rush is penniless and playing Sunday league football for his local pub - at the ripe old age of 27. But after a car crash in March, which left him with his jaw, cheekbone and neck broken, as well as back injuries, he is hoping to rebuild his career.

SINCE THE former Leeds United midfielder Ian Snodin took over as Doncaster's manager in the summer he has signed Neville Southall, John Sheridan, Tommy Wright and now this week a new No 2 - his elder brother Glyn, also ex-Leeds. Ian is the player-manager but he still expects to be told what to do by his big brother. "We're close as brothers", he said. "But since I'm still playing, Glyn will take training and anything he wants to do I will abide by. And on Saturdays he will have the role of manager."

When it comes to reconstruction, Rovers certainly got the right man. The new owner, Aidan Phelan, asked John Ryan, a former benefactor of the club, to become the chairman. It has been well documented how Ryan made his money from cosmetic surgery and how Melinda Messenger was among those whose career he gave a lift. But how come he didn't choose to invest in one of the Bristol clubs - or possibly the pair of them?

FLOWER POWER

is alive and kicking in Chinese football.

When the team Huandao equalised from a controversial penalty in a recent league game against Yuhuan, 1,000 of the home team's supporters demonstrated against the referee's decision outside the government building in the town. And when their protests went ignored some of them took to smashing flower pots. And then the following night they staged a silent vigil. Any similarity with the San Francisco flower children, however, ends with the pot.

AS YOU WERE



THE NEATLY coiffed Harry Redknapp (above, left) joined West Ham in 1964, but it was not until the 1967-68 season that he secured a regular place on the wing where he played 170 times and scored eight goals. The closest he came to honours with the Hammers was a

League Cup semi-final defeat to Stoke, which was eventually settled after a second replay at Old Trafford. From East London, Redknapp moved to Bournemouth, Brentford, Seattle (US), Oxford and Bournemouth again, before returning to Upton Park in 1982 as assistant

manager, and later, manager. Redknapp today (above, right) can not only take pride in assembling the strongest squad West Ham have had in at least a decade, but in his son Jamie, who, although never a Hammer, will be an international player for some time to come.

THE PRICE IS RIGHT

EVER THE existentialist Sweeper would be the first to admit that the seagulls following this trawler are still awaiting that first sardine, but England should put seafood firmly on the menu by dispatching Sweden with clinical efficiency this afternoon. England's away form was excellent in their World Cup qualifiers and the Hod squad showed against Argentina that they

SWEeper's Staking Plan

TODAY'S BIG MATCH

Sweden v England

Correct result tip England to win (£4 at 11-8, Ladbrokes & Total).

Second best tip 2nd England (£1 at 5-1, generally available).

First goal-scorer Michael Owen (£2 at 5-1, Total).

SATURDAY BORE DRAW

(None expected to end 0-0)

Lithuania v Scotland (£1 at 8-1, Coral).

SATURDAY 'DESMOND'

(None expected to end 2-2)

Uruguay v Russia (£1 at 18-1, Hills).

MOMENT OF

MUTUAL MADNESS

(E1 accumulator with Ladbrokes);

Paracel Islands (16-1) to beat Czech Republic; Iceland (10-1) to beat France; Malta (14-1), to win in Macedonia; Latvia (15-1), to win in Norway and Azerbaijan (16-1) to win in Slovakia. Payout: £80,645.

ORIGINAL BANK: £100.

CURRENT KITTY: £80.38.

TOTAL WAGERED TODAY: £10.50.

(including 50p tax paid on).

ON THE BOARD

Name: Rick Parry.
Position: Chief executive of Liverpool FC.
Form: Ex-chief executive of the Premier League (where he negotiated the highest ever sports TV deal with BSkyB); ex-consultant to Birmingham and Manchester Olympic Games' bids; has also worked as a chartered accountant for Ernst and Young.
Big Ideas: Experience in TV and event management make Parry an ideal man to advise Liverpool on the future of European football - the club will contribute to Uefa's task force to modernise competitions. Parry will ensure the Reds don't lose out.

IN T'NET

Found on the Web: Memories of famous Wales matches of our time ENGLAND V WALES 16 NOVEMBER 1966: WEMBLEY STADIUM In 1966, Wales travelled to Wembley to take on the newly-crowned World Champions in a European Championship qualifier. Our brave warriors put up a fight worthy only of the present-day team. They lost 5-1. GERMANY V WALES 16 OCTOBER 1991: NUERMBERG, GERMANY Not that I'm morbid or anything, but this was another hammering. We'd beaten the Germans 1-0 in Cardiff and 4,000 Taffies went to Nuremberg with hopes of a decent result which would mean us qualifying for the European Championships. Gavin Maguire's second-minute back-pass, a sending off, and we lost 4-1. Why do we bother? <http://freespace.virgin.net/p.stead/famous.htm>

MY TEAM

DELIA SMITH
NORWICH CITY

Cookery author and football club director "I only became aware of football when I was 25 and England won the World Cup, in 1966. Anyone who was 25 then became a football fan overnight. My first live match was England against Ireland with George Best playing. My second live match was in Norwich with my boyfriend. I remember going through the turnstiles, and we stood at the River End and it was brilliant. Then we got married, and I became a Norwich fan from then on... When you think of all we have these days, football remains in the dark ages. Stadiums are just not built for being hospitable! The worst things are the food and the toilets."

SEEN BUT NOT BOUGHT

WHAT BOLTON fan would want to be without their very own Bolton Wanderers' Ice Bucket? Made from "Rivington-cut" 24 per cent Lancashire lead crystal, the bucket retails at a reasonably affordable £54.99 and is surely the fashionable option for half-time refreshments. Emblazoned with a classy Wanderers' crest, the bucket would no doubt come in handy on many occasions. Queues for the toilets can get very lengthy, after all.

WHO ATE ALL THE PIES?

THE RANGERS' Scottish Dinner gives a good indication of what a fan requires before a match at Ibrox. The starter - Chieftain o' the Fuddin' Rice - is served "wif a Dram". The Sirloin of Scotch beef is served in a whisky sauce, and the main ingredient in the Tipsy Laird Trifle is whisky. All this for £27.50, and no doubt it's served early enough to leave time for a few quick drinks afterwards.

THEY'RE NOT ALL DENNIS BERGKAMP

Unsung foreign legionnaires No 4

GUSTAVO DI LEILLA

The 25-year-old Argentinian midfielder is currently playing at Hartlepool. Di Leilla was born in Buenos Aires and played football in his home country for the Second Division side, All Boys, before moving to the Spanish Second Division side, Grenada. He progressed, for nothing, to Darlington, and then to non-league Elyth Spartans. His FA Cup goal against Blackpool last November - on Match of the Day to boot - made him a Spartans hero. Shirt-waving, South American-style celebrations followed him to Hartlepool. On a one-year contract, he scored from a free-kick last week against Hull, and is rated as "not bad at all" by followers of Hartlepool.

A tale of Ricky, Brian, Gunners and glory

"SEX AND death", Woody Allen once remarked. "Two things that happen once in a lifetime - though at least after death you're not nauseous!" To this short list he might have added ... and Luton Town Football Club winning a major trophy".

Silverware on the Kenilworth Road mantlepiece really is a once in a lifetime occurrence, and 24 April 1988 was the day the club called in the engravers.

Luton then were as Bolton Wanderers today - up and down more often than Bill Clinton's zipper, our flirtation with the top division never quite blossoming into a full-blown affair. But in cup competitions we shone, as the mighty Arsenal were to find out that sunny Sunday afternoon on Wembley's manicured meadows.

Now let's get one thing clear right from the start. Unfashionable we may be. We could sign Owen, Kluivert and Ronaldo, bedeck the entire squad in Armani kit, and change our name to Real Luton, and we'd still be about as chic as Roger Whittaker. But, and this is a but not to be minimised... Arsenal took the field that day with four full internationals in their squad, we had eight (including a Nigerian attack's son - now tell me that's not fashionable!) And still we were the underdogs, 5-1 against as compared with Arsenal's 5-4 on.

But hey odds are made to be confounded, and, impelled by our best player - perhaps our best-ever player - Ricky Hill, playing his first game since a Boxing Day leg-break,

we fairly swamped the Gunners right from the off. A goal was bound to come, and it did, courtesy of Brian Stein just as the quarter hour came

a lead is virtually non-existent. Most games we win, we come from behind. But protect if we did, manfully, gainfully... Arsenal woke up on the hour to just how much hard currency was riding on their collective butts to regain the trophy they had lifted the previous April.

A flurry of activity around our area saw scrambled goals from Martin Hayes and Alan Smith, to say nothing of a Luton crossbar more pockmarked than a Sarajevo apartment block. But were we to be denied? Were we heck!

Spurred by reserve goalkeeper Andy Dibble's heroic 85th minute penalty save from Nigel Winterburn, we staged the finale of which legends are made. This was *Pulp Fiction*, we were Samuel L Jackson, and did we ever strike Arsenal

down with a vengeance! With the final whistle looming, Arsenal's Gus Caesar, like his Roman namesake, was caught unawares, and Danny Wilson stuck the knife in.

Extra-time seemed a formality, though if it was no one thought to tell our super-sub Ashley Grimes. Ashley probably fancied another half-hour. He'd only been on the pitch five minutes and was so full of running it was a wonder any of his team-mates could keep up with him. One who did was Stein, (what was he on - I never saw such energy!) who met Ashley's beautifully judged cross with his usual sure touch.

Fourteen seconds remained on the clock, we'd turned 1-2 into 3-2, and we weren't about to blow our one chance of glory in this,

our 99th year. And nor did we. Joy be unconfined, bliss be unmeasured. For 10 years ago did the team thrust upon me by a mix of kismet and perversity a rise from obscurity and a drink from the silver cup.

Granted it wasn't the Cup, as in FA. But it was a cup, and when you're as starved of success as we are, and endlessly pipped (plastic pitch, away supporters ban) by a nation's footballing folk, you take what you can get, thank you very much.

And that we took it in such dramatic fashion as ill-behaves an unfashionable little club like Luton makes it taste all the sweeter.

And the fact that, like sex

and death, we may never do it again - at least, not for another 99 years - makes it sweeter still.

I think that particular person helped Murali get more wickets by saying those things. What Arjuna Ranatunga, the Sri Lanka captain, said of David Lloyd's comments about spinner Muttiah Muralitharan's bowling action the day before Muralitharan bowled out England and completed a 16-wicket haul.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

We have always been convinced the Americans are not afraid of anything. But after we organised a meeting in Sarajevo they were afraid and now we are going to Moscow they are afraid again.

Primo Nebiolo, the president of the IAAF, athletics' governing body, hits out at the number of Americans who have pulled out of the weekend's Grand Prix meeting in Russia.

He came into the garage like an animal, saying I tried to kill him. I find his behaviour disgusting.

David Coulthard after the incident with Michael Schumacher at last week's Belgian Grand Prix.

I have a drink, but at the right time, that's the difference. I've become a bit of a connoisseur - I drink wine. Ray Parlour puts his boozy days at Highbury behind him.

Nationwide League: Birmingham City's big striker is supplying the power for a Premiership push

BY ADAM SZRETER

If early season form is anything to go by, this time next year Charlton Athletic could be in the Champions' League and Birmingham City back in the top flight of English football for the first time since the mid-1980s. In Charlton's case it will probably be a question of dreaming on, and on, but for fans of the Second City's second club a place in the Premiership alongside their neighbours and fierce rivals, Aston Villa, is long overdue.

Thirteen seasons have gone by since Birmingham last found themselves among the nation's elite. In that time there have been a string of managers in succession to Ron Saunders, a bewildering number of players bought and sold by the last manager, Barry Fry, and an image problem stemming from the club's links, through the board, to a newspaper that told the world that Elvis was alive and well and living on the moon and that Hitler was a woman.

It has taken the new regime a while to be taken seriously but now, with Trevor Francis in charge of the team the signs are that Birmingham, who entertain Bury today, are at last heading in the right direction. Francis was an idol at St Andrew's in a way few players manage to be at any club, but he is probably as conscious as anyone of the need to consign his achievements as a player to the history books. The Blues are desperate for a new hero and, in Dele Adebola, Francis might just have found one for them.

With five goals in his first five games, the Nigerian made the kind of start to a season that strikers dream of and already the film Francis paid Crewe Alexandra for the 23-year-old's services earlier this year is beginning to look shrewd investment. Tall, strong, fast and skilful, Adebola seems to have all the physical attributes required to succeed. In temperament though, he is more gentle giant than raging bull.

"I possibly need to be a bit more aggressive, but I've done OK without it so far," he said at Birmingham's training ground on the outskirts of the city. The Scouse accent betraying his upbringing. "Sometimes, being a big lad, when you go into challenges referees tend to favour the smaller player so you have to be careful. I've only been booked four times in my career and two of them were for kicking the ball away."

His parents moved to England from Lagos when Adebola was six months old, settling in Liverpool as a result of his father's frequent visits with the shipping company he worked for. There Adebola played in the same city schools' team as



Dele Adebola, more gentle giant than raging bull, has Trevor Francis' 27 goals for Birmingham as his target this season

Mike Egerton/Empics

Adebola lifts the Blues

Robbie Fowler: "I was going to go to Liverpool as a YTS, but with Robbie there all the attention would have been on him because as a kid he was phenomenal. I just thought Crewe would be a better option and one day if I'd good enough maybe I'd play at a higher level."

At Crewe, like so many who have gone on to international honours, Adebola came under the tutelage of Dario Gradi. "The coaching there is unbelievable," Adebola said. "Everyone at the club is taught to be comfortable on the ball, no matter what

age or what position you play." After four seasons, he was ready to take another step up.

"When he was at Crewe he tended to play as a lone striker," Mick Mills, Birmingham's assistant manager, said. "It possibly suited Crewe but it didn't suit Dele."

"Here we play with two strikers and it's helped his game to blossom and towards the end of last season there were signs that he had potentially an excellent player on our hands. I remember one goal in particular against Manchester City when

he powered straight through on a 60-yard run and finished it with one of the deepest touches you've ever seen."

It was that kind of finishing that brought Adebola to the attention of Lawrie McMenemy, now in charge of Northern Ireland, who wanted to take advantage of the fact that Adebola can represent any of the home nations, as well as Nigeria. "He had the idea of playing me and Chris Armstrong up front together," Adebola said. "At first I was interested, but then when I thought about it I'd never even been to

Northern Ireland – at least I've lived in England and my parents are from Nigeria. That might have been my only chance and I might never play international football, but it just didn't feel right."

Away from football Adebola spends most of his time commuting between his Solihull home and Liverpool, where he is setting up a property business with a friend.

For the moment though his business is scoring goals for Birmingham City and attempting, among other things, to win a sponsor's car worth £25,000 by scoring more than the 27 goals in a season that his manager once achieved for the club.

"I'm not even sure if it's all competitions or just league goals," a bemused Adebola admitted. "In fact, I'm sure the manager said the other day it was just league goals."

Well he would, wouldn't he? Adebola might be making life easier for Francis at the moment, but it seems the old striker has no intention of letting his protégé overtake him in the local legend stakes just yet. But it might not be long.

Dundee United's manager, Tommy McLean, last night insisted he was putting the beleaguered club's fortunes before his own after accepting the inevitable and agreeing to step down. McLean left the troubled Tannadice side "by mutual and amicable" consent just four games into the new Premier League campaign after a poor start which leaves them second bottom with only a single point. Paul Sturrock, the former United player who has been in charge of St Johnstone, was confirmed as McLean's successor after agreeing to leave Perth to take on the task of restoring his old club's fortunes.

McLean's demise was hardly helped by a humiliating League Cup exit at Third Division Ross County recently, but the United board's patience finally seems to have snapped after just five wins in 26 competitive matches during 1998.

Queen's Park Rangers have parted company with their chief executive, Clive Berlin. The move is thought to be part of a cost-cutting exercise by the troubled London club, whose shares have slipped from more than £1 to a low of just 15p.

Coventry City have made a new offer to sign Wolves' former England Under-21 international winger Steve Froggett for around £1.5m.

Kenny faces baptism of fire at St Andrew's

THE BEST defensive record in the Nationwide League will today be placed in the hands of 20-year-old Patrick Kenny, who makes his debut for Bury at Birmingham after Dean Kiely's five successive clean sheets earned him a place in the Republic of Ireland squad to face Croatia.

Kenny is currently on loan from the UniBond League side Bradford Park Avenue, but the Bury manager, Neil Warnock, is confident that the

young Yorkshireman is up to the job. "I have no qualms about throwing him into a big game," Warnock said. "We saw what he can do when he was with us prior to the season."

Kenny will sign a two-year contract on Monday, by which time Bury could be top of the table if they win at St Andrew's. Birmingham themselves can go joint top with Wolves and Sunderland if they win, but Trevor Francis has five players

under treatment and winger Jon McCarthy away with Northern Ireland. Central defender Michael Johnson (hip) is expected to be fit, but winger Peter Ndlovu is definitely missing after knee surgery, while left-back Simon Charlton (groin), striker Paul Furlong (hamstring) and midfielder Bryan Hughes (heel) are once again major doubts.

Steve Bruce takes his Sheffield United side to the Yorkshire derby

at Huddersfield angry that he will be without Vassilis Borkoski and Dean Saunders, who are both away on international duty. Bruce believes their absence should have been enough to force the postponement of the game. Chris Wilder is expected to replace the Greek international at right-back with Marcelo favourite to take over Saunders' striking role. Curtis Woodhouse could replace the suspended Ian Hamilton, but

Bruce's hamstring injury keeps him out. Huddersfield's Marcus Brownlie is hoping to recover from a groin strain in time to play, along with Lee Richardson, who has foot blisters. In defence, Steve Jenkins should also recover from a knee injury.

Stockport's Paul Cook is winning his race to start against Grimsby as Gary Megson's side chase their first win this season. The midfielder has not trained all week after an injec-

tion for a niggling heel injury but should be fit. Grimsby's Steve Livingstone and Mark Lever are in contention for recalls, but their manager, Alan Buckley, is likely to retain the side that thrashed West Bromwich 5-1 on Monday.

Chris Hay could be in line for a Swindon recall as Bristol City visit the County Ground. Midfielder Scott Leitch may also return after recovering from a dead leg.

...And statistics

Why promotion out of First Division might be a matter of 'pedigree'



Bruce Rioch, now in charge of the sleeping giants, Norwich, has the best managerial record in the top flight of current First Division managers.

The Watford manager, Graham Taylor, is on the record for his view that the First Division is the hardest from which to gain promotion. Recent years show elevation to the Premiership is becoming the preserve of a handful of "yo-yo" clubs. Exceptions prove the rule - Charlton this season, Barnsley last and Swindon in 1993/4 - but Crystal Palace, Nottingham Forest, Leicester, Middlesbrough and Bolton have all already gained promotion to the top flight twice to the Premiership's six-year existence.

Of the nine current first division clubs with Premiership experience, only Barnsley and Swindon (both having survived just one year at the top level) have a club pedigree in the lower half of the current division's table, when pedigree is rated as the number of post-war years spent at a lower level than now subtracted from the years spent at a higher level.

On this basis, West Brom, Wolves and Birmingham can be counted as true sleeping giants, with their lofty backgrounds not yet having been rewarded by Premiership football. The current First Division table has all three in its top five.

Sunderland, leading the way this season, are third in the pedigree table and have had a year in the Premiership. With their

Nine current First Division clubs with Premiership experience

| Club | Seasons |
|----------------|----------------------|
| QPR | 4 (92/3 - 95/6) |
| Crystal Palace | 3 (92/3, 94/5, 97/8) |
| Ipswich | 3 (92/3 - 94/5) |
| Norwich | 3 (92/3 - 94/5) |
| Bolton | 2 (95/6, 97/8) |
| Sheff United | 2 (92/3 - 93/4) |
| Barnsley | 1 (97/8) |
| Sunderland | 1 (96/7) |
| Swindon | 1 (93/4) |

Post-war First Division pedigrees

| Years spent above current level | Years spent below current level | 'Pedigree' | Most recent season in top flight | Ground capacity |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| West Brom | 34 | 2 | +32 | 1985/6 25,39 |
| Wolves | 34 | 4 | +30 | 1983/4 28,525 |
| Sunderland | 26 | 1 | +25 | 1996/7 41,590 |
| Birmingham | 24 | 4 | +20 | 1985/6 25,812 |
| Sheff United | 22 | 6 | +16 | 1993/4 50,370 |
| Ipswich | 24 | 10 | +14 | 1994/5 22,600 |
| Bolton | 22 | 12 | +10 | 1997/8 25,000 |
| Norwich | 20 | 14 | +6 | 1994/5 21,994 |
| Plymouth | 14 | 8 | +6 | 1987/8 19,179 |
| QPR | 14 | 17 | +3 | 1995/6 19,148 |
| Huddersfield | 11 | 17 | -5 | 1971/2 24,000 |
| Crystal Palace | 12 | 21 | -9 | 1997/8 26,400 |
| Oxford | 3 | 16 | -13 | 1987/8 9,572 |
| Bristol City | 4 | 26 | -22 | 1979/80 18,108 |
| Barnsley | 1 | 24 | -23 | 1997/8 18,806 |
| Watford | 6 | 32 | -26 | 1987/8 22,000 |
| Grimsby | 2 | 29 | -27 | 1994/7 8,870 |
| Bury | 0 | 33 | -33 | 1929/9 11,841 |
| Swindon | 1 | 35 | -34 | 1993/4 15,728 |
| Port Vale | 0 | 42 | -42 | 22,356 |
| Bradford | 0 | 45 | -45 | 1921/2 18,018 |
| Tranmere | 0 | 45 | -45 | 16,789 |
| Crewe | 0 | 51 | -51 | 6,000 |
| Stockport | 0 | 51 | -51 | 11,540 |

Eight First Division managers with Premiership experience

| Current club | Premiership clubs | Games | Points | Average pts/game |
|----------------|--------------------|-------|--------|------------------|
| Bruce Rioch | Arsenal | 38 | 63 | 1.66 |
| Trevor Francis | Sheff Wed | 126 | 174 | 1.38 |
| Alan Ball | Portsmouth | 98 | 117 | 1.19 |
| Ray Harford | Blackburn | 58 | 69 | 1.19 |
| Peter Reid | Man City / Sunland | 84 | 98 | 1.17 |
| Colin Todd | Bolton | 54 | 59 | 1.09 |
| Mark McGhee | Leicester | 24 | 16 | 0.67 |

Statistics: Brian Sears / Nick Harris

Fowler expects swift return

LIVERPOOL'S ROBBIE Fowler could make his first-team return in his side's UEFA Cup match in Kosice on 15 September. The striker made a surprise return to action in a Pontins League game at Leicester earlier this week and, with Liverpool not having another reserve team game until the end of the month, it is becoming increasingly likely that Fowler could be on the bench in Slovakia and may even be involved in next Wednesday's Premiership fixture with Coventry at Anfield as a substitute.

Fowler hopes to end the theory that two out-and-out goalscorers cannot play together as he anticipated partnering Michael Owen again. "Let's just say the partnership will be interesting," he said. "Michael is playing really well and I have always had confidence in my ability to score goals. Sometimes people forget that I create goals too. I have always brought other players into the game." Fowler, 23, has been unable to play for seven months due to cruciate knee damage and was not expected back until Christmas.

Birmingham City's impressive start to the season has been shaken after the winger Peter Ndlovu underwent knee surgery that could keep him out for the next nine games. The Zimbabwean international had the operation after his knee locked on the training ground. Trevor Francis, the Blues' manager, said: "We knew straight away that it was cartilage damage." Ndlovu is now likely to have to spend the next month recovering.

Dundee United's manager, Tommy McLean, last night insisted he was putting the beleaguered club's fortunes before his own after accepting the inevitable and agreeing to step down. McLean left the troubled Tannadice side "by mutual and amicable" consent just four games into the new Premier League campaign after a poor start which leaves them second bottom with only a single point. Paul Sturrock, the former United player who has been in charge of St Johnstone, was confirmed as McLean's successor after agreeing to leave Perth to take on the task of restoring his old club's fortunes.

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IN TOMORROW'S INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY 17 PAGES OF SPORT



HEARING THE HORSE WHISPERER

Monty Roberts' extraordinary equine

Euro 2000: Defender hungry for more top-class competition faces opponents prepared to make it tough for England

Campbell takes balanced view

Ambitious centre-back looks for leadership at struggling Spurs to help him improve his already admired play. By Glenn Moore

IT IS not just the fear of their footballers returning with injured bodies that concerns club managers in international week; they also worry about their minds.

With time to consider and compare, many have come back demanding a transfer or a rise after discovering that life really is greener on the other side.

Sol Campbell does not intend to demand either a move or a pay rise when he returns to White Hart Lane on Monday, but being away from Tottenham has given him time to reflect on the club's troubles.

As club captain, he has strongly defended the team, but yesterday he took the opportunity to speak out and call for leadership and improvement.

Tottenham, he admitted, "were being left behind". Although he remains in no rush to leave, the unspoken, but implicit threat was that if things did not change for the better he would leave when his contract expires in three years' time if not before.

"Three years ago we had a good team, it was Ossie Ardiles [and Gerry's Francis] team and we had reached the FA Cup semi-final and done well in the league. For some reason it all fell apart and we are being left behind."

"I know people move on, you can't help it in football, and we have bought good players, but it is also about chemistry and balance and we haven't had that."

"It is disheartening. There have been games where I've come off the pitch wondering what's happening. You want to play football and get on with it but the situation [the speculation about the futures of the chairman, Alan Sugar, and the club's manager, Christian Gross] is going to be at the back of your mind. Sometimes the lads joke about it, humour is a way footballer's deal with these things, but you have to go out on the pitch and do something about it."

"The fans are hungry. They look at other clubs doing well, spending money and spending it wisely. We have a great squad but the balance is not right. We needed to take the last eight games of last season, when we had some unbelievable performances, and start with them this season."

Campbell would not speak specifically about Gross but said the Swiss had become "more open with players". He added: "Whoever is manager you want them to be able to teach you things. I want to progress as a player, I want all the team to progress and improve, improve me as a player and improve the team."

Does Gross do that? he was asked. "I'll pass on that" was the eventual reply.

Campbell said he had not spoken

to Gross or Sugar about how the team might develop... yet.

Already a highly regarded player, Campbell's stock rose even further after an excellent World Cup, during which he drew praise from Franz Beckenbauer.

With Spurs underachieving there has inevitably been speculation about his future. Blackburn have already had a £10m bid rejected, while Liverpool and Manchester United, who he supported as a boy, have kept an eye on his situation. So, will he move?

"You can move but that is no guarantee of winning things if you do," he said. "It is not as if I am 27, 28; I am 23. And it is not just about winning things, you've got to be happy with the environment. I want the complete package. I have time on my side but you never know in football, I might leave in one year; it might be in eight, if at all."

"What I really want is to stay at Spurs and win things, that would be much more of an achievement. Spurs would be unbelievable if they started winning and, having been there so long, I want to be there when things are happening."

Contentiously, but realistically, he added: "Tottenham have never really won anything. Obviously they've won the FA Cup but they've never been good at the league except in 1961, and they've had fantastic players since."

This would seem to suggest Campbell's eventual departure is inevitable but he said: "We can win the championship if we get the right team together but it would take a lot of hard work. It is up to the chairman, the manager, and the players, to build a side."

So the pre-season "shopping trip" to Milan, which caused such a stir, really was for shopping. "Yes. I didn't need to tell people I was going, the club are not the police, not my mum and dad. But do you think if I was signing for an Italian club I would blatantly fly to Milan? The story made me laugh."

One of the enduring memories of the World Cup is Campbell in full flight bearing down on the Colombian defence. Only Tottenham fans with long memories will recall him doing this at White Hart Lane but, said Campbell, this is partly because playing as one of three central defenders for England, rather than two for Spurs, gives him more licence to go forward.

Plus, he went to the World Cup determined, after a tough club season, to make an impact. "We'd just escaped relegation and it was from there to the World Cup. It's the biggest competition in the world and you've got to express yourself." Looking towards today's game and European Championship qualifying, he added: "It's made me hungry for more."

SOL CAMPBELL ON MICHAEL OWEN

EARLIER THIS week Michael Owen said Sol Campbell was the toughest opponent he had faced. When the compliment was passed on to Campbell yesterday, he sat back and cooed: "Ooh, that's nice coming from him."

The respect is mutual. Of the Liverpool teenager Campbell said: "He's a bit tricky - and that's the understatement of the century."

"He's a very exciting player. He's got touch, pace, scores goals and he's brave. His size helps him, if someone is big and pacy big guys [like Campbell] can handle him but because he's so small he gets under your arms and he's hard to tackle. Once he gets on your shoulder it's all over."

Campbell has a theory for coping with him. "You have to keep him in front of you but it's hard

because there is so much movement on the field. He likes going wide so he can get a run and take on players."

Campbell, like a lot of players, would not be drawn on his hardest opponent. Normally this is because players do not want them to know but Campbell had a different approach. He said: "You can't tell, a player may give you a really hard time one season but the next year you're all over him."

Of possible candidates he said: "Alan Shearer is stronger than Owen and more of a target man. He holds the ball up, lays it off, gets in the box."

"Gianluca Vialli has great movement, John Hartson and Emile Heskey are very strong. But," he concluded "there's no one quite like Owen."



Sol Campbell: 'You can move [to a new club] but that is no guarantee of winning things'

Swedes place faith in science

BY JOHN SINNOTT

WHILE THE England players have been encouraged to put their faith in Eileen Dwyer, their Swedish opponents will rely on a more scientifically-based school of preparation - psychology.

Swedish football has succoured many of Britain's most innovative coaches, notably Roy Hodgson, who began his managerial odyssey with Halmstad 23 years ago. The Blackburn Rovers manager quickly learnt that in football the mind plays as big a part as the feet.

"It was freezing, about minus eight. It was also very damp because the training ground was by a river," he said of his first day in Sweden. "I'm on a pitch, one of those sandy all-weather ones, the like of which I have never seen before. The guys were wearing balaclava hats, four layers of clothing and gloves. And as far as they're concerned, I was going to be their coach, psychologist and physical educator."

A tough environment to work in, but a rewarding one, according to Stuart Baxter, the coach of AIK Stockholm, who joined the Swedish club from Vissel Kobe in Japan at the start of the year. The former Preston North End and Dundee United defender started his coaching career at Orebro in 1984 when Hodgson left for Malmö. He has never looked back.

"I was a typical British player, a good professional, who cared about my job and about losing and winning. But when I sat in the dressing-room before a game I was anxious and worried. None of the coaches I worked with in Britain did anything to relieve that."

"When I moved abroad, my game improved immeasurably. It wasn't until I began to study sports psychology that I discovered why. So when I started to coach, the first thing that I wanted to change was the environment my players worked in," adds Baxter, who has been influenced by the work of the Norwegian sports psychologist Wily Raio.

Baxter vividly remembers visiting Hodgson at Malmö and watching the Swedish international Jonas Thern train. "There was a player who had everything in a mental filing system and just pulled out that little bit extra when he needed to. Michael Jordan has the same attitude. When he goes out on the basketball court, he thinks that he can run through people. It's not confidence, it's not arrogance, it's just a state of mind."

This belief in the importance of the player's psychological preparation is widespread among Swedish coaches. Lazio's bespectacled coach Sven-Goran Eriksson has often talked about the disparity in the time allocated to physical and mental preparation in football.

It is an approach that has proved highly successful considering that ice hockey is Sweden's main sport. In the last six years Sweden have reached the European Championship semi-finals and won a World Cup bronze medal. Prior to this, they finished fifth in the 1974 World Cup and were beaten finalists in 1958.

The Swedes have regrouped since failing to qualify for France 98. Most notably Tommy Svensson, arguably their most successful coach ever, has made way for the former Under-21 coach Tommy Söderberg. Talented youngsters like Jörgen Pettersson and Fredrik Ljungberg, who played under Söderberg for the Under-21s, have graduated to the senior squad and recent friendly results have included wins over Denmark and Italy and a draw with France.

The current side is not as strong as the one that did so well in USA 94 but, one thing is for sure, come five o'clock, the Swedes' minds will have been finely attuned for this opening qualifier for Euro 2000.

Giggs can help to repair battered reputation

BY GUY HODGSON

WHATEVER CRIME the Wales football team have committed in the past, they have served their time. It has been 40 years since they qualified for the final stages of a World Cup or European Championship and their current prospects are not exactly auspicious.

It is typical of their misfortune that while Scotland have avoided any World Cup finalists, Wales have two in Group One barring their way to Euro 2000. No country would be sanguine trying to finish above Italy and Denmark, but Robby Gould's team are ranked 101st in the world and have been humbled recently by Moldova, Georgia and Tunisia.

You have to go back 23 months since Wales last won a competitive match against the less-than-mighty San Marino, and their last outing in Tunis resulted in a lamentable 4-0 defeat.

It is easy to be defeatist, as Gould realises. "I have to create a new positive attitude," he said. "We have to be mentally strong."

Tonight that fortitude will be tested against Italy at Anfield, a fixture that could define Wales' future. Win and the European Championship qualification campaign will receive an injection of hope, lose and their realistic hopes of playing in Belgium or the Netherlands in two years could be over. A home defeat would make an already unlikely task of finishing in the top two - Denmark

Switzerland and Belarus are the other teams in the group - an even more remote possibility.

Home is a relative word,

course, as tonight's match is in Liverpool because the national stadium in Cardiff is being rebuilt. It is with a community distance of Wales' traditional northern football hotbed, however; and there are hopes that Merseysiders will attend because of the glamour of the opposition. "Back Wales for the night," Gould urged, "you can go back to being Liverpudians on Sunday morning."

Not that Italy, whose season does not begin until 13 September, will be brimming with household names. Dino Zoff, appointed as coach in succession to Cesare Maldini after the

World Cup, has eschewed the 16 Italians plying their trade in England, preferring home-based players in a squad of 22. The best known are Roberto Baggio and Alessandro Del Piero, although one or the other played in the World Cup, not both, and a more representative member of the party is Fabio Cannavaro, whose high reputation within his profession has not extended to international recognition.

Gould watched the Italians in several matches in France and was so impressed by Cannavaro he had a video made of his performances as a teaching aid for aspiring Welsh defenders. "I'm in raptures over him," he said. "He's the best defender in the world. He's only about 5ft 8in but

he doesn't let you jump, he knows how to tackle, he knows when to defend and he knows not to go over the halfway line. If I was a Premiership manager with £20m I'd buy him."

Gould's enthusiasm for one player was not matched by his staff for the entire Italian team. Only a defeat on penalties to the eventual winners, France, halted their World Cup, but the tournament exposed a side with a sound defence, strong attack but with a midfield that lacked creativity. Their last match was a 1-1 victory this week, although it ought to be stressed that it was against the Juventus youth team.

"I wasn't impressed, to be honest," Neville Southall, who is coaching the Welsh squad, said. "I

watched them against Austria in France and, although they were sound tactically, they lacked a little bit going forward."

"Wales are re-emerging. We've got a good enough squad here to take on anyone in the world. Anfield suits good footballers and we've got loads. We're a much, much better team than people make out."

That team will remain a mystery until shortly before the kick-off - "I'll announce my side," Gould said, "when Dino Zoff lets me know what his is" - although it is safe to presume that Ryan Giggs will be selected. The Manchester United player is expected to get a free role behind Nathan Blake and Mark Hughes and usually raises his game

when faced by the bigger nations in world football.

Possibly his best game in a Welsh shirt came three years ago in the last European Championship qualification match, when he caused anxiety in a German defence that was solid enough to win the tournament proper the following summer. "The only thing wrong with Ryan Giggs," Bert Vogt said at the time, "is that he is not German."

"Just having Ryan here puts us halfway there," he said. "He gives everyone a lift. A victory over Zoff's Italian side will not push Wales halfway to Euro 2000, but it will be a significant step towards restoring their battered international reputation."



Euro 2000: Scotland decide against experimentation in Lithuania but Republic show faith in their 'Young Dubs'

Brown opts for the old hands

BY PHIL SHAW
in Vilnius

GLAMOROUS IT isn't. Seventy-four days after departing the World Cup amid the heaving high-rise stands of St-Etienne, Scotland start the long haul to the European Championship finals against Lithuania today. The Zalgiris Stadium, built by German prisoners of war, holds 6,000 on seats bought from Ibrox and has a badly rutted pitch.

A training session there yesterday confirmed Craig Brown's feeling that the circumstances called for experience rather than experimentation. So there is no place in Scotland's starting line-up for Barry Ferguson, the 20-year-old Rangers midfielder, already burdened with the tag of "the future of Scottish football", or for the older but also uncapped Steve Fallon and Neil McCann. Instead, Brown has picked a side with an average age nudging 32, which contains just one player younger than 30 - Christian Dailly. Jim Leighton wins his 90th cap in goal and Alfie McCoist returns for his 60th. The only comparative newcomer is the Leicester centre-back, Matt Elliott, who makes his competitive debut after three friendlies.

Elliott's introduction means a change of role for Colin Calderwood, who sat out the Scots' exit from France '98 against Morocco because of a broken hand. Calderwood will play on the right side of midfield, with the right-footed Dailly continuing on the opposite flank despite Blackburn's stated intention to deploy their £5m signing as a centre-back.

Darren Jackson will be expecting both to play off the front two and to bolster midfield when necessary. The inclusion of Jackson, nominally a forward, prompted Brown to dismiss suggestions that it was a conservative selection. "We saw Calderwood play effectively down the right against Finland earlier this year and deliver some great crosses," the Scotland manager said. "As for Dailly, some of the best left-backs Scotland have had were right-footed. Tommy Gemmill and Eric Caldow."

Brown acknowledged the advances made by two young left-backs, Blackburn's Callum Davidson and Hearts' Gary Naysmith. While their emergence was likely to make Dailly's stay on the left "temporary", the "tricky environment" of Lithuania had convinced him to go for proven internationals.

"I don't detect any complacency from these players.

They've enjoyed being in the big tournaments and are hungry to get to another. They know that to do that you have to pick up points at places like this. I can send this team out knowing every one of them is a committed, hardened professional."

The 40-year-old Leighton, who shouldered the bulk of the blame for Morocco's three goals, remains "the appropriate man for the job" according to Brown. McCoist convinced him of his fitness after an arduous work-out yesterday.

The state of the playing surface may prompt a modification to the passing game favoured by Scotland. The sight of the ball bobbling over John Collins' foot in practice persuaded Brown to instruct Collins and Paul Lambert to be more direct.

Elliott's place is just reward for his consistency in the Premiership, where his combativeness saw him arrive in Vilnius sporting seven stitches in an eye wound following a brush with Chris Sutton and a barely-healed broken nose sustained in a challenge with Andy Cole. It also indicates that he has dispelled the doubts raised by his uneasy display against Finland, whose goal stemmed from his mistake.

"It doesn't do you any good to get bad reviews," said the 23-year-old Londoner, who qualifies for Scotland by virtue of a deceased granny from Partick. "If the criticism was a touch unfair, these things happen to the best of players."

With his wife due to give birth imminently, Elliott has spent much of his spare time phoning home. "I'll be playing with my fingers crossed," he said.

Brown hopes for much the same from all his defenders against a Lithuanian team he rates as the best from the former Soviet states in the Baltics.

Twelve months ago, when McCoist was winning his 50th and seemingly final cap against Belarus, the Lithuanians pushed the Republic of Ireland hard before losing 2-1 here.

Lithuania's new coach, Kestutis Latoza, is expected to include exiles from Germany, Russia, Switzerland, Poland and the Netherlands. Difficulties in securing the release of foreign-based players led to his predecessor using 58 players in a year. But where better than a city where images of Lenin have been removed and a bust of Frank Zappa erected to demonstrate that necessity is the mother of invention?

SCOTLAND (3-4-1-2): Leighton (Abertillery), Murray (Rangers), Black (Aberdeen), Bremner (Dundee), Calderwood (Tottenham), Lambert (Celtic), Collins (Everton), Dally (Blackburn); Jackson (Celtic); Gallacher (Blackburn); McColl (Kilmarnock).

Brown acknowledged the advances made by two young left-backs, Blackburn's Callum Davidson and Hearts' Gary Naysmith. While their emergence was likely to make Dailly's stay on the left "temporary", the "tricky environment" of Lithuania had convinced him to go for proven internationals.

"I don't detect any complacency from these players.

Mulryne 'just excited to play'

BY DAVID ANDERSON
in Istanbul

PHILIP MULRYNE is ready to play the biggest match of his career for Northern Ireland against Turkey tonight. The Manchester United midfielder faces the daunting prospect of making his first competitive appearance for the Irish in the Euro 2000 qualifier in the intimidating Ali Sami Yen Stadium.

Mulryne, who has only made three senior appearances for United, will be winning his sixth cap. The 20-year-old was on the bench for most of United's Champions League campaign last season.

"This has got to be the biggest game of my career so far," Mulryne beamed. "Up until now it was making my League debut at Barnsley, but this is even bigger. It's the European Championship and the first game of a new campaign. I'm not worried about the match. I'm just excited."

Lawrie McMenemy, the Northern Ireland manager,

said: "The fact that Mulryne is at Manchester United helps a great deal. He has been brought up in a big club atmosphere surrounded by quality players under the guidance of the best manager in Britain, in my opinion."

McMenemy claims this opening Championship game will be one of the toughest his side will face in Group Three. "It will be one of our most difficult games in the group, but if we could do well here and in our next two games, which are at home, we could look forward to having a few points in the bag by Christmas," he said.

Kevin Horlock is set to play his first international match in 11 months and Iain Dowie, on his 50th appearance, will lead the side in the absence of the injured Steve Lomas.

Mustafa Demizi, the Turkish coach, has no injury worries but is under pressure as the Turks have lost their last three matches to Albania, Israel and Russia. Demizi has earmarked Dowie as the main threat, along with Keith Gillespie.



Roy Keane, restored as Ireland's captain, in training yesterday

McCarthy is in buoyant mood

BY STEVE TONGUE
in Dublin

WITH BOTH President Clinton and Jack Charlton in town - it was not immediately clear which of them the crowds had turned out for - and heavy rain falling, Dublin was more chaotic than ever yesterday. After a sodden training session at Lansdowne Road, however, the Republic of Ireland's mood ahead of this afternoon's opening European Championship group match against Croatia was more upbeat than for some time.

Their coach, Mick McCarthy, who often cuts a lugubrious figure, seemed as buoyant as Jolly Jack himself in naming a side comprising nine Premiership players in defence and midfield, plus two of the First Division's most highly regarded strikers, Robbie Keane of Wolves and Keith O'Neill of Norwich.

While making all the right noises about not underestimating a country that finished third at the World Cup, McCarthy must privately be delighted with the problems faced by his opposite number Miroslav Blazevic. One of the few coaches to enhance his reputation - and keep his job - this summer, he must do without the injured strikers Davor Suker, Alen Bolic and Goran Vlaovic as well as Everton's Slaven Bilic and the gifted midfielder Robert Prosinecki, who says he no longer wants to play for Blazevic.

Croatia can still call on figures as familiar and formidable as Derby's Igor Stimac and his former clubmate Ajosha Asanovic (now with Panathinaikos), Robert Janic, who spurned Coventry for Real Madrid, Milan's Zvonimir Boban and the newcomer Igor Tudor, who joined Juventus after the World Cup.

Like Keane, the midfielders Damien Duff and Mark Kinsella will be playing their first competitive games for their country as part of a group known as the "Young Dubs". They will be partnered in the middle by Jason McAteer and Roy Keane, the latter stripped of the captaincy early in McCarthy's reign but now forgiven and welcomed back for his first international since last September's World Cup tie in Lithuania.

This game, and the trip to Yugoslavia next month, will be crucial, as much in setting the tone and fully winning over the public again as for the points at stake against the two strongest adversaries.

The Republic supporters would welcome confirmation over the next two matches that the bad old days of watching everyone else compete at the major tournaments have not returned permanently.

They would also love a new hero or two and have great expectations of the 19-year-old Keane. Now playing as an out-and-out striker for Wolves alongside Steve Bull, he will form what looks an exciting partnership

today with O'Neill. "Michael Owen has proved that genuine pace is something that unsettles even the best organised defences," said McCarthy. "Robbie Keane has that kind of asset. "Keith O'Neill has been out for almost two years with injuries. We've missed him, his pace and strength."

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There is plenty of experience behind them in full-backs Denis Irwin (48 caps) and Steve Staunton (74) with Phil Babb and Wimbledon's Kenny Cunningham in the centre of defence.

McCarthy has said that if offered a draw in advance of the match, he would not take it. Third in the world or not, sharing the points would look a good result in the circumstances for Croatia.

They would also love a new hero or two and have great expectations of the 19-year-old Keane. Now playing as an out-and-out striker for Wolves alongside Steve Bull, he will form what looks an exciting partnership

| EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP - THE COMPLETE QUALIFYING CAMPAIGN | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| GROUP GUIDE | | | GROUP ONE | | | GROUP TWO | | | GROUP THREE | | |
| By RUPERT METCALF | | | ITALY, DENMARK, SWITZERLAND, WALES, BELARUS | | | GEORGIA, ALBANIA, GREECE, SLOVENIA, NORWAY, LATVIA | | | FINLAND, MOLDOVA, TURKEY, NORTHERN IRELAND, GERMANY | | |
| THE LONG road to the finals of the 2000 European Championship began a week before this year's World Cup. Allan Simonsen's Faroe Islands side were trounced in Tallinn on 4 June, losing 4-0 to Estonia. There have been two more qualifiers since then, but the serious action begins this weekend, when 31 international matches across the continent, from Stockholm to Sarajevo, will begin the process of deciding which countries will compete for the European title in Belgium and the Netherlands in the summer of 2000. | GROUP ONE | GROUP TWO | GROUP THREE | GROUP FOUR | THE WORLD |
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SPORT



IN FOOTSTEPS OF BABE RUTH P19 • LAM'S NEW HORIZON P25

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Euro 2000: Hoddle's men aim to make light of poor record against Sweden and lay to rest the ghosts of St-Etienne

England's chance for new start

BY GLENN MOORE

ENGLAND WILL tonight attempt to lay to rest the mixed memories of St-Etienne, and the recent controversies over book-writing and faith-healing, to return to what they do best: playing a game of football. It is an important one too, the first and potentially most difficult step on the way to the 2000 European Championships.

With a young and developing team this is a competition England can realistically hope to win but first they must qualify from a group that also includes Bulgaria, Luxembourg and, as usual, Poland. With Bulgaria fading as a force Sweden would appear the main rivals and a win here would put England in charge of Group Five. Such a goal is attainable but not easy.

Sweden, while not qualifying for the World Cup, have made rapid progress under their new coach Tommy Söderberg and have a promising side laced with youth and leavened with experience. It is more than six hours since they conceded a goal, and in Henrik Larsson and Jörgen Petersson they have strikers very capable of scoring one.

Nevertheless England, despite their troubled preparation, poor post-War record against Sweden (three wins in 12) and traditional September sloth, ought to return with at least a point. Though definitely without the suspended David Beckham, and possibly short of Tony Adams, they should have the quality and confidence to continue their good away record under Glenn Hoddle.

Adams, said Hoddle, is "50-50" after tweaking an ankle in training. This is probably true

though, following Hoddle's admission that he lies about injuries in order to confuse opposing coaches it cannot be guaranteed.

Hoddle took considerable offence yesterday when asked if Adams was really injured. In the circumstances it is a reasonable question though, given Adams' recent criticism of Hoddle in his serialised autobiography, the subject is a particularly sensitive one.

Paul Merson is also said to have a thigh strain though that should not stop him taking his place on the bench. Steve McManaman is out, having returned to Liverpool for treatment on a long-standing Achilles injury.

As Martin Keown is the obvious replacement for Adams, with Garech Southgate moving to the centre of the defence, the main selection poser is in midfield where a balance must be struck between frustrating the Swedes and providing a platform for Michael Owen and Alan Shearer.

Paul Ince, Darren Anderton and, for want of competition, Graeme Le Saux, are assured of their places. Paul Scholes, despite a quiet start to the season, should play to link the front pair with the midfield and prevent

the team getting stretched out. The other place would have gone to Nicky Butt but, following his withdrawal, it is between Rob Lee and Jamie Redknapp. Hoddle is usually keen to keep things tight in away matches, which would suggest that Lee's industry would be preferred, but the coach might well take a chance on Redknapp's long passing.

"We've come here to win but if we get a draw that's still a good result," said Hoddle yesterday. "Sweden are a good technical side they play through the pitch, have a solid defence and players of class in the last third."

"If we can get a confident start and a win under our belts the World Cup slowly disappears. It will always be there as a magical memory but we have to look forward. This is a way of starting again."

Hoddle's opposite number said he did not intend to man-mark Owen though in Leicester's Pontus Kaarmark has that option. Other British-based players expected to play are Roland Nilsson and Magnus Hedman of Coventry, Celtic's Larsson and Rangers' Joachim Björklund.

Perhaps naively Söderberg

and Nilsson allowed themselves to be drawn into the

| SWEDEN v ENGLAND | |
|----------------------------|-------------|
| possible teams | |
| KAAMARK | LJUNGBERG |
| Leicester | Halmstad |
| BJORKLUND | Redknapp |
| Valencia | CAMPBELL |
| HEDMAN | SHEARER |
| MIAULLY | SOUTHGATE |
| Covency | OWEN |
| LARSSON | Aston Villa |
| AIK Solna | Arsenal |
| PETTERSSON | Liverpool |
| B Mjölby | SEAMAN |
| P ANDERSSON | KEOWN or |
| B Hönshögslöv | ADAMS |
| SCHWARZ | Man Utd |
| NILSSON | Arsenal |
| Covency | INCE |
| ZETTERBERG | LFC SAUZ |
| Anderlecht | Chelsea |
| Referee: P Collins (Italy) | |

THE SATURDAY CROSSWORD

No. 3708. Saturday 5 September

By Phi

ACROSS

- 1 What travelling salesman may have in common (4, 4)
- 5 Large quarry is good for protected bird (6)
- 9 Glad in face t' develop wrinkles, mostly (8)
- 10 No time to solicit the opinion of a diplomat (6)
- 12 Pop music that receives the reverse of honour causes protest (4, 3, 4)
- 15 Much of episode is from a foreign capital (5)
- 17 A version of Cinerama showing certain Continental stuff (9)
- 18 Turned up work - refined work - but no starring role (5, 4)
- 19 The amount of poetry that will suffice! (5)
- 20 Best thing for the job? Pill, in this case (3, 4, 4)
- 24 Dickensian hero, one ignored by famous actor (6)
- 25 Neighbouring chap receiving cut amidst evidence of a minor accident (8)
- 26 Most of back's crippled, with a burning sensation (6)
- 27 Rent that's involved with hall entrance (8)

The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive handsigned copies of the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P.O. Box 4015, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5BL. Please use the box number and postcode to give you own personal touch. Last week's winner: V. T. from Woking, Surrey; A. B. from Hartlepool, N. Yorks; B. Davies, Llanelli; G. Scott, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Friday's solution

Last Saturday's solution

DOWN

- 1 The workrate of PR men - it's not measurable conventionally! (10)
- 2 No church in second holy city is unexciting (10)
- 3 Fired sailors aboard capsized ship (5)
- 4 'Theatre worker' the definition set e.g. anagram in cryptic form (5-7)
- 5 Those close to getting the job drink and keel over (9)
- 7 Ecstasy supplied by water-plant (4)
- 8 University security system? (4)
- 11 Opening of Norma can't ever do badly round grand opera house (6, 6)
- 13 Group of shirking examples Asia copies, possibly (10)
- 14 Priestly account accepted by various idolators I ignored (10)
- 16 Temporary reduction in school hours? (5-4)
- 21 Rubbish in painting etc. upset mum (5)
- 22 Past version of a get-up: a got-up? (4)
- 23 With onset of pain, I will take this? (4)

PAUL MERSON looks set to leave Middlesbrough in a £6m transfer to Aston Villa, despite his manager insisting that there is no problem between the former Arsenal midfielder and Paul Gascoigne.

Merson still receives treatment to combat alcoholism and it is rumoured he has become worried by the effects Gascoigne's drinking bouts could have on his own battle with the booze. The pair shared a house

when Gascoigne first moved to Teesside but their body language in recent matches has seemed to indicate that their friendship has deteriorated.

However, an irate Bryan Robson, the Boro manager, ridiculed suggestions that he was about to lose Merson, who only signed a new five-year contract at the end of last season. "I have not got it in my mind to sell Paul," he said. "This story is sheer rubbish."

WELSH WATER is not good enough for Italy's superstar players - they have brought gallons of their own with them in preparation for today's European Championship clash with Bobby Gould's side at Anfield.

The Serie A millionaires have also brought all their own food, including tons of pasta, which has had to be stored in two rooms at the team's hotel in Ewloe, north Wales.

The Azzurri's antics have in-

cluded changing the yellow curtains in the rooms because, apparently, the players could not sleep properly, and bringing their own chef with them.

But it was the gallons of mineral water that has amazed Welsh FA officials: "The Italians have brought enough water to have a lake of their own," said a source. "They wanted it to boil their own pasta in rather than the local water."

Giggs' mission, page 30

©Published by Independent Newspapers (UK) Limited, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, and printed at Mirror Colour Print, St Albans Road, Watford and Hollywood Avenue, Oldham. Back issues available from Historic Newspapers, 01992 840370.

Saturday 5 September 1998 Registered as a newspaper with the Post Office

**NO FAITH HEALERS,
JUST FOOTBALL.**

Lithuania V Scotland, live today, only on Channel 5, from 2.30pm 5

WILKINSON
SWORD

WEEKEND REVIEW

COMMENT • ARTS & BOOKS • COUNTRY & GARDEN • TRAVEL

Richard Hoggart on what it means to be English

The week the market stalled: a City trader's diary

Beyond The Beach: Alex Garland interviewed

Grand canals: an insider's guide to Venice

Brian Hutton/INS



Christopher Brown will spend tomorrow at home. It's a nice place for a quiet Sunday: a large, secluded, stone farmhouse in the heart of comfortable Oxfordshire between Witney and Minster Lovell. But tomorrow, if past experience is anything to go by, it will resemble one of the scarier scenes from *Zulu*. Shortly after lunch, a ferocious army, screaming for his blood, will lay siege to his farm. Last time they attacked, 80 panes of glass – and nearly a quarter of the slates on his roof – were smashed by flying stones while 60-year-old Brown and his wife covered under a staircase. Sometimes it's worse – one end of his house is still being repaired after being burnt out by a car-bomb last year. Nick Deacon will be wishing he was at home. He's a young Thames Valley constable, and, as such, is one of hundreds of policemen – from six forces – who can expect to be called for the day to have missiles and accusations of brutality hurled at them.

"It's a pain in the neck," he says.

Like Grunwick or Wapping before it, Hill Grove Farm has come to represent the unenviable face of policing. In the last major attack, Deacon was twice struck by flying rocks. Was it frightening?

"Bloody right it was."

But Cynthia O'Neill will be wishing she wasn't at home. An elderly ex-nurse who lives with four cats in nearby Milton-under-Wychwood, she's been barred by an injunction from coming within a mile of the farm, which for the past 27 years has bred and sold cats for scientific experiments.

"It's an infringement of my way of life," she com-

Showdown on the farm

The animal rights community is resolved that, whatever it takes, Christopher Brown's cat-breeding establishment must be closed. The Government is resolved that, whatever it takes, he must be allowed to keep it open. The Battle of Hill Grove is becoming a war – and truth is already a casualty

plaints, with some justification, since she's been campaigning against Brown more or less full-time for seven years. "I live in the area. I'm not even allowed on the main road. And they've confiscated my mega-phone." She is not an obviously intimidating figure, especially in relation to a heavily built farmer like Brown. But she'd dearly like to be shouting a bit more amplified abuse at him on Sunday. Indeed, as the person who first began the campaign to destroy his livelihood, she has a reasonable claim to be considered Brown's worst enemy.

There's competition for that title, though. Two other campaigners, Natasha Daffernague and John Curtin were barred from the Hill Grove vicinity earlier this year by the same injunction, as were, improbably, eight named animal rights groups and

"anyone holding himself out to be an animal rights activist".

This in turn has provoked the wrath of Liberty, who see the order as an abuse of the 1997 Protection from Harassment Act. Other animal rights organisations (though not the RSPCA) have called

BY RICHARD ASKWITH

for Hill Grove Farm to be closed. Some 48 MPs signed a recent early day motion condemning "establishments which breed cats and kittens for the vivisection industry" (Hill Grove is the only such establishment in Britain). And some 200,000 people have signed an anti-Hill Grove petition. Above

all, there are Heather James (also known as Barwick) and Greg Avery (also known as Jennings), the organisers of the group that now co-ordinates the anti-Brown campaign: Save the Hillgrove Cats. (They have their own version of the farm's name.)

Greg, an unemployed 30-year-old from Birmingham, won't be there on Sunday; he's subject to his own exclusion order. But Heather, who's also from Birmingham, is confident that Sunday's siege will be the biggest yet. In the 14 months of its existence, Save the Hillgrove Cats has built up a mailing list of 5,000, and coaches will be coming from all over Britain. "There could be 2,500 people, maybe 3,000," says Heather. "And this is just the beginning. Whatever it takes, that place is going to close."

A more prudent or thin-skinned man might have

called it a day by now – as the owners of Consort Beagles in Ross-on-Wye, after 10 months of attention from James, Avery and others, did last year. But prudence and sensitivity are not Brown's forte. Stubbornness is.

"It's just anarchy," he says defiantly across his dining-room table. "Terrorism. I've been beaten up, I've had letter-bombs, and so have my staff. But I'm not going to give up. If I did we'd have mob rule."

This fear is shared by the Thames Valley police, who have created a special unit to deal with the threat. Sections of 10ft-high steel fencing are stacked in Brown's grounds, ready to be erected around the farm at a moment's notice; there's a police radio mast on his chimney, and officers patrol

Continued on page 2

INSIDE

| | | | | | |
|---------------------|-----|-------------------------|-------|------------------|-------|
| Letters | 2 | Obituaries | 10-11 | Travel | 21-27 |
| Leaders and Comment | 3-7 | Arts & Books | 12-17 | Listings & Games | 28-29 |
| Features | 8-9 | Gardening & Countryside | 18-20 | Today's TV | 32 |

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A lesson Blair can learn, even from lame duck Clinton

HOBBLE HOBBLE. Quack, quack. It has been Bill Clinton's week, and not a bad one for a lame duck. It has demonstrated the strengths and weaknesses of modern democratic leadership. With his authority draining away at home, not just because of his dalliance with Monica Lewinsky but because he is coasting to the end of his unrenewable second term, he has still been able to mobilise the symbolic power of the US presidency.

He was not much use in Russia, a bit like a distant relative calling with particularly bad timing at a house riven by family feuding. The best he could do was signify by his presence that the world has an interest in the Russian crisis and that the west is ready to prop up the economy if any of it can be made to stand up.

But in Ireland, Mr Clinton's visit is undoubtedly valuable. As Tony Blair observed, and despite Mr Clinton's early posturing for the benefit of the Irish American lobby, no US president has done more for peace in Northern Ireland. The coming together of the governments of Britain, Ireland and the United States behind a set of common principles provided the condition for breakthrough on Good Friday this year. And Mr Clinton's telephone diplomacy, calling the key players at all hours of day and night, helped coax them towards agreement. His presence in Ireland, then, gives a further push to that intangible momentum which has been so important in keeping the peace process going in defiance of the logical incompatibility of the two sides' positions. It is "only" symbolism of course, but symbolism matters in the wake of an atrocity such as the Omagh bombing.

This has been a week which exposed the strengths and weaknesses of democratic responses to terrorism. Mr Blair and Mr Clinton are good at empathy, even though there are times when both men are a little too transparent. In Omagh last week Mr Blair was seen switching on and off of his mourning face for the cameras. Yesterday, Mr Clinton gave a heartfelt speech without notes, but we know too much about his easy emotionalism to suspend disbelief altogether.

In this respect, the Monica affair has made it harder to take the president seriously, even when his words are well-crafted and – at the moment they are uttered at any rate – sincere. Equally, it is easy to be cynical about Mr Clinton's motives for the timing of his visit but as one shop worker said: "Look, he's taken the time and the thought to see us here. Who cares why he's doing it?"

Modern democracies are less good, however, at dealing with terrorists. Mr Blair's initial response to Omagh was exactly right. He wrote a thoughtful article which set out why the Government should not simply "take out" the bombers, and insisted: "We must be democratic in the means we deploy."

There was an awkward contrast between these sane words and Mr Clinton's opinion-poll-fuelled cruise missile strikes in Sudan and Afghanistan. There was also a disjunction with the Irish prime minister's promise to rush "draconian" measures through the Dublin parliament, and it was unfortunate that Mr Blair allowed himself to be bounced out of his original position.

There is a logical problem with this week's emergency sittings of the British and Irish parliaments, which is that it suggests that anti-terrorism legislation has not been tough enough for the past 24 years. But there is a larger moral and practical problem, which is that terrorism



always feeds on a sense of injustice. Passing laws which avowedly contain an element of rough justice is, therefore, more likely to augment than diminish terrorism.

That applies, in triplicate, to Mr Clinton's recourse to violence in Sudan and Afghanistan. It is a danger of focus-group politics, the brand of statesmanship which has succeeded the Thatcher-Reagan era on both sides of the Atlantic. Politics is less and less fought out at four- or five-yearly intervals, when voters are asked to pass broad verdicts on whole periods of administration. Even a lame duck politician like Mr Clinton has his day-to-day poli-

cies dictated as much by opinion research as by his notion of what might be in the country's best interest.

There are two of the President's dicta which have particularly impressed Mr Blair. One is that the most powerful person today is the member of a focus group. The other is that, in order to be re-elected, you must never forget those voters who switched to elect you in the first place. If there is a lesson of this week, it is that democratic leaders such as Mr Blair should rely more on their judgement and less on the need to be seen to be "doing something" by focus groups of New Labour switchers.

Who is going to buy all these S-reg books?

BOOK PUBLISHING more and more resembles car manufacturing, in that about half of all the books produced in a year now seem to be published in September. There are all sorts of reasons given for this ridiculous log jam, and almost all of them are false.

It is said that people go on holiday in July and August, as if we were like the French and shut down the entire country on the same four weeks each year, or like the Lancastrian working classes off to Blackpool for Wakes week. Holiday patterns are a bit more varied these days, and the book-buying public is just as likely to be on holiday in April or October.

It is said that books need to be published now in order to be entered for the big literary prizes. That might be true of bad novels, which need to be bounced onto the shortlists at the last moment, but good novels stand a better chance of winning prizes if they are given the chance to sink into the collective consciousness over a period of some months.

It is said that books need to come out now so they can get on the "books of the year" compilations, in time for the Christmas sales boom. Do they think readers have not got wise to those networks of cronyism?

Political books, it seems, have to be published just before the party conferences to give lobby correspondents something to read on the train to Blackpool. But, unless a publisher has something of the scale of Margaret Thatcher's Downing Street Years, leaked extracts from which ruined one of John Major's conferences, they are going to get lost in the welter.

It has been said that big non-fiction books have been held until September because publicists are desperate to get the author onto *Start The Week*, which is off the air in summer. Which is a sad commentary on the state of publishers' marketing departments.

Indeed, the lack of marketing imagination in publishing is alarming: the industry seems to be in thrall to superstitions about dates and notions of the British holiday which would be of more use to historians than a modern profit-making business.

The wind of change is starting to blow through the business, as Internet bookshops start to work wonders on the backlists. But that only points up even more the extent to which this branch of British industry is in need of modernisation.

Surely anyone with marketing gumption should be able to sell good books at any time of year. This year's S-reg car sales rush was the last August binge, as the letter is going to start changing twice a year, in March and September, next year. Publishers should take their cue and likewise abolish their annual jam.

A revival too far

LAST NIGHT'S live premiere of *Tubular Bells III* prompts a thought about the virtues of censorship. When it comes to reviving fashions, a line has to be drawn somewhere. Although much of the Eighties has already been revived, parts of the Seventies are proving more difficult. Flares and platform boots have come back, and *Grease* is as engaging second time round. But it has to be accepted that some things are simply not worth reviving. Disco with the capital D (as in *Last Days of* and *Tubular Bells*, whether the rave version or not, are two such things. Let us leave them for our disbelieving grandchildren to discover.

A place where the bees behave and the sprats do somersaults

It is the last day of the holidays and Ardmore has never looked more beautiful. Outside the window, Jimmy Moloney's bees are making their last forays into the honeysuckle. The other morning, I woke early and looked out of the window to find Jimmy standing at the end of the garden. He was still and quiet as a man in a trance watching his bees come buzzing down the lane and into the garden. "So this is their last stop before they get to the hives," he said. "I've been trying to figure it out for ages."

This is the nicest time of year in Ardmore. The last of the summer crowds have vanished, taking their children back to school in the city and leaving us to the peace and solitude of autumn. My friend John King says we are going to have an Indian summer: Unlike me, he will be here to enjoy it, looking out across the bay to Mine Head. In his high windows near the pier, watching the small boats handling for mackerel late into September and reminding himself how lucky he is to live in this quiet corner of Ireland.

The mackerel shoals arrive in late August. They turn around the Head and chase into the bay, thrashing along the surface and driving thousands of sprat before them. The smaller fish somersault out of the water, hurling themselves away from the striped predators in the water below. The chase goes all the way to the shallows of Ardmore Beach. The sprat beach themselves and children wade into the water, jumping and swimming in pursuit of the mackerel. I normally watch this from the Storm Wall (so called because the waves crash over in the winter gales) along with a dozen or more older fishermen. As a child, I would haul scores of

mackerel up the wall. It wasn't really fishing, more like a massacre. Afterwards, my friends and I would take our catch to the caravan park and sell them. A penny a fish until the caravanners tired of mackerel and closed their doors on us. We would move on and try the farmhouses of the district. They were a much tougher prospect. The farmers' wives argued and bargained us down to a halpenny a fish.

I came here a few days after being in Omagh. It was hard to imagine that the two places existed on the same island. The people here were naturally touched by the bombing. Never before have people in the South been so visibly shaken by an atrocity carried out in the name of Irish unity. The bells of the local Catholic church near the Storm Wall rang at 10 minutes past three, and the population stopped what they were doing and observed a minute's silence. But Ulster and the Troubles were a world away and when the last solemn bell had rung, Ardmore returned to its easy everyday rhythm.

To look at the village now, it is hard to imagine that it too had a traumatic past, an earlier chapter of the same history. Back in the 1600s, when Cromwell's armies were rampaging through Ireland, the village castle was put under siege. When the inhabitants surrendered, Cromwell's men hanged very male over the age of 13. Several hundred were executed in this way. There is a round tower and an ancient cathedral overlooking the town, site of the earliest Christian settlement in Ireland. Monks built the tower to escape the ravages of local chieftains and the Vikings who tormented these coasts for generations.

I have stood near the tower on misty mornings and tried to imagine what it

FEARGAL KEANE
People enjoy their drink, but a troublesome man wouldn't last long in the company of fishermen

was like to see those longboats looming in from the sea rather like the "doom-burdened caravels" Masefield wrote of when describing the arrival of Columbus's ships in the Americas. The lands to the west of Ardmore, around the mouth of the river Blackwater, formed part of the Elizabethan plantation carried out by Sir Walter Raleigh. To this day, the fields have a more settled, more typically pastoral and English look than the wilder territories in the west of Ireland. There are great houses along the Blackwater, some fallen to ruin, others still owned by the remnants of the Anglo-Irish ascendancy, those whom we call "the up the rivers".

Molly Keane immortalised this world in her novels, the poet Edmund Spenser lived nearby but is not fondly remembered in local folklore. My great grandfather was based in Ardmore as a sergeant in the Royal Irish Constabulary, a servant of the British crown. His son, my grandfather, was born in the RIC barracks on the main

street but grew up to be a committed Irish nationalist. He joined up with Michael Collins and took part in the war against the British, a war in which the RIC were primary targets of the IRA. My great grandfather had retired by the time the war came and I don't know if father and son ever spoke about politics. What they continued to have in common, however, was a love of Artmore.

My grandfather built a cottage on the cliff outside the village and brought his family, my mother and her siblings, to holiday there every summer. That was in the postwar years when Ireland began its fight to emerge from the economic and cultural protectionism of the De Valera years. It would be a long battle, the final stages of which we are only now entering. And yet to me, Ardmore always seemed to exist at one remove from the narrower and darker aspects of the country in which I grew up. Perhaps this was because it was a place of summer and thus experienced in a mellow light. But I also think it had a lot to do with the wayward streak in local nature, a rebelliousness which doesn't take kindly to the rigid strictures of outsiders, be they English landlord or Catholic priest. In evidence, let me briefly describe what happened when, in the early 1840s, when the legendary "apostle of temperance", Father Matthew Murphy, arrived in Ardmore.

The good priest had already had remarkable success in luring the peasantry out of the drunkenness which went hand in hand with their wretched, poverty-stricken existence. It looked as if Father Matthew was about to have a similar success in Ardmore. Alas, on the night of his visit, after a well-attended lecture, a large group of

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ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD

Sinn Fein and violence • Global economic crisis • North Korean missile • News at Ten • Ibiza • 'The Last Days of Disco'

GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS

Views on the knock-on effects of the market collapses in Russia, Japan and South-east Asia

THE ECONOMIST

A LOT of hard thinking needs to be done about the international financial system - and even more important, about the domestic financial systems of emerging economies. The vulnerability to financial crisis was created not by international speculators and other bogeymen, but by woefully inadequate oversight of domestic finance. But the governments concerned were not the only ones who failed to realise that. They had many willing helpers in screwing things up. There is plenty of blame to go around.

THE JAPAN TIMES

THE INTERNATIONAL economy has never been as weak and unpredictable as it is now, and never before have the two men meeting in Moscow been as powerless to do anything about it. The men now heading the US, Germany or Japan cannot lead the world alone. Traditionally, such leaders have been able to command the world stage and focus attention on an issue in a way that moves world opinion, or at least that of their peers. Today, there is no such presence, and we seem to be paying an increasingly heavy price.

THE NATION

Malaysia

IT IS universally recognised that greed is the destroyer and God is the creator. The US, despite its economic power, should feel vulnerable to the possibility of a recession if its own backyard, Latin America, eventually succumbs to the Asian crisis. Signs are already there in Mexico. If that becomes a reality, Americans who have lost most of this year's gains on the NYSE can blame the new species of rubber-barons now plotting the next looting in their currency trading rooms. The final effects will get to them soon enough.

HONG KONG STANDARD

WHATEVER THE preference of individual governments, it has become clear to all that the rules of the game across Asia must be changed in order to keep rapacious speculators at bay and to maintain stability in their economies. This is important, not merely to countries in this region, but to the West, and not merely because Europe and the United States are already feeling the ripple effects of the region's economic decline, but because in recent weeks the fight against these destructive speculators has taken on the proportions of an East-West struggle.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

IS THE promise of the market-driven global economy of the Nineties unravelling? Hardly, but the very idea is facing its most severe test. Japan, the world's second-largest economy, poses the biggest problem as the government dawdles in indecision, unwilling to face the shock of cleaning up a banking system festooned with bad debts. The Russian economy is tiny in comparison, but the depth of political uncertainty there is exacerbating fears that a world nuclear power is rudderless, and thus dangerous. Japan is the most startling and troublesome example of a centrally controlled economy out of sync with the open capitalism driving markets today. Russia's more spectacular failure at creating an honest market economy has some there pining for the old days.

THE COURIER-MAIL

Australia

SOME ECONOMISTS argue that the world is already on the brink of recession. Japan leads an almost clean sweep of Asian economies with negative growth, all experiencing the worst conditions for half a century. The Russian economy shows no signs of correcting itself, and Latin America is the latest victim of the global financial contagion that had its origins in Thailand last year. As long as the US keeps its economic head above water, there is hope the world will not slip into recession. But if the Japanese continue to avoid taking the necessary harsh medicine, and the Russians are left to flounder alone, the prospects are not good.

NORTH KOREAN MISSILE TEST

Response to the Communist regime's test firing of an intercontinental ballistic missile

KOREA TIMES

THE LATEST missile testing attests to the fact that the communist North has continued to improve its missile systems in defiance of international objections. To discourage the North's missile efforts, the international community must take concerted and substantial steps, since efforts at friendly persuasion and verbal warnings have been exhausted.

YOMIURI SHIMBUN

Japan

THE PROLIFERATION of weapons of mass destruction, has been on the rise since the end of the Cold War. For the international community, it has become more important than ever that immediate action be taken to reverse this unsettling trend. What Japan must first do is co-operate in every way it can to advance international disarmament efforts, particularly those aimed at curtailing the

number of weapons and ending their proliferation.

SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST

NORTH KOREA is developing missiles capable of hitting targets throughout Northeast Asia. And this underscores the necessity of renewing efforts to draw Pyongyang out of its isolation. Sanctions are not achieving that aim. Backing such an unpredictable country into a corner through crippling sanctions is to court danger on a potentially catastrophic scale.

However unpalatable it may be to run the risk of appearing to grant concessions, it is necessary for some hard bargaining to be done in earnest.

ASAHI SHIMBUN

Japan

NORTH KOREA continues to develop missiles and does not hesitate to sell them to other

countries for hard currency. Unfortunately, its posture of threatening the proliferation of missiles will not win it the understanding and sympathy of the international community. It is impermissible to wield a sword in one hand and ask for assistance with the other.

NEW YORK TIMES

US

SOUTH KOREA remains committed to improving relations with the North and sees the missile test as underlining the dangers of keeping North Korea isolated. Keeping the North cut off, the argument goes, would make it even more dependent on revenues from its missile exports. This line of reasoning has its limits. If North Korea seriously wants American recognition and economic co-operation, it cannot continue to stir nuclear and missile fears. The North is destroying its hopes for wider acceptance and assistance.

FILM OF THE WEEK

Reviews of 'The Last Days of Disco'

THE SPECTATOR

THE BEST disco arrangements have a wonderful spanky exhilaration which discs themselves rarely lived up to. Stillman skewers this ruefully: he is a discursive filmmaker, yet he makes better use of the deafening music, dappy glitter-balls and bozo doormen than louder directors. (Mark Steyn)



THE HERALD

STILLMAN IS good with actors, writes sparkling dialogue, but is less good at plot and handling crowds, and the disco is not as stirring as it ought to appear. It may seem to be not about very much but, in fact, it is a penetrating portrait of a time and way of life. (William Russell)

STILLMAN IS a gifted writer of tart aphoristic dialogue, but why can he not channel it into films with a genuine dramatic impetus? The cast is not enough to stop this lumpen, one-paced affair from sliding into anonymity. The suspicion

remains that the disco angle is there only to grab the attention of the hipster audience who would otherwise care not a jot about the fate of these young fogeys. (Trevor Johnston)

THE FINANCIAL TIMES

STILLMAN'S STYLE is wicked, delicious, yielding layer after layer of straight-faced comment, devastatingly accurate but unkind. (Martin Hoyle)

THE DAILY MAIL

THERE'S NO more deadly accurate observer of young urban professionals. There is something of Austen about him. A sense of morality is never far from the surface. (Chris Toole)

NEWS AT TEN

Comment on ITV's proposal to shift its main evening news to a different slot

THE EVENING STANDARD

THE ITV chiefs' plan to abolish *News At Ten*, replacing it with an early-evening news broadcast at 6.30, signals a sad and unnecessary dumbing down of the network. If this goes ahead, there will effectively be no proper prime-time news on mainstream commercial television. Independent television chiefs should think very carefully about throwing away this jewel in their crown.

THE MIRROR

NEWS AT TEN is unique. It is not like BBC news, which aims at a snootier audience. It is not like the 24-hour news services, which overheat with coverage. It cannot be lost simply for the sake of running films interrupted only by commercials. ITV's chiefs must think again. The bongs must go on ringing out throughout the land at 10 every weekday night.

IT IS none of Blair's damned business what time ITV chooses to broadcast the news. Nor should it be any concern of the ITC. Politicians like *News At Ten* where it is, because it falls conveniently for divisions in the Commons and provides them with a prominent platform. So what? ITV's first duty is to its viewers and its shareholders. Viewers do not want movies and dramas interrupted by the news, most of which is nothing of the sort and could be shown at any time. (Richard Littlejohn)

THE SCOTSMAN

BY SCHEDULING its early evening bulletin to coincide with a slot currently filled by the dreadful regional news programmes produced by both the BBC and the independent television companies, ITV may precipitate further welcome developments.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"It's good to be home in Northern Ireland." Bill Clinton, referring to his Irish ancestry

"If Russia goes badly wrong, what we may see is history starting all over again." Lord Lamont, former Conservative Chancellor

"When she looks you in the eye, it's like looking at two loaded Exocet missiles." James Gillick, artist, describing the sittings with Baroness Thatcher when painting her portrait

"I never wanted to be thin to have a good time because I had a hugely good time being fat." Maeve Binchy, author

"In America, you are lucky if you know the name of the British Prime Minister." George Walden, former education minister

"These people are not rational like you and me." A police officer's remark to Dr David Starkey, as he escorted the historian from a crowd of Diana supporters

the First Minister to accommodate IRA/Sinn Fein without an ounce of Semtex having been surrendered. The republicans are steadily achieving their aims without offering one substantial concession in return.

IRISH INDEPENDENT

WHATEVER THE IRA may say, decommissioning forms part of the agreement. And it is not a question of what the IRA call "word games". It is a question of Sinn Fein's commitment to using only peaceful and democratic means to advance their aims. It is a question of making it possible for the Ulster Unionist Party leader, David Trimble, to sit with them in a new Northern executive. On Tuesday, Mr Adams made a major and laudable step in the right direction. We look forward to his next vital steps towards making peace and tolerance a reality.

THE IRISH TIMES

NOT ALL of Mr Trimble's party will be immediately persuaded of the value of Mr Adams's words. Even among Mr Trimble's loyal ranks there are those who insist that there should be actual decommissioning of weapons before Sinn Fein can sit in an executive. Trimble will not be without internal resistance if he seeks to respond affirmatively to Sinn Fein's gesture. Nonetheless, outside of his party ranks he will be under intense pressure to do so. Mr Adams's statement and Mr McGuinness's participation in the decommissioning body gives him at least some of the political space he requires.

THE HERALD

SINN FEIN'S apparent acceptance of the end of the war has been mirrored by the militant loyalists, and the appointment of Mr McGuinness to the commission on the removal of terrorist weapons is also welcome, but only if he is prepared to demonstrate a creative commitment to that process. There is a perception that the next move should come from Mr Trimble, but he is in a difficult position.



SINN FEIN RENOUNCES VIOLENCE

Reactions to Gerry Adams's announcement that the republican terrorist campaign has been brought to an end

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

SINN FEIN/IRA's real aim is to split the Ulster Unionists by luring David Trimble into a meeting with Mr Adams. Sadly, the signs are that this Government, so ready to capitulate to republican pressure, is determined to be tough on the Unionists. Pressure is growing on

BRITISH TOURISM IN IBIZA

Opinion on the behaviour of British youth abroad following the resignation of the Vice-Consul to Ibiza



honour, least of all the good name of the British in Europe.

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

THERE CAN be no excuse for the excesses of this reckless and often violent bunch of youngsters. They clearly have no respect for themselves, let alone for other people or other nations. But let's not forget who else is at fault here. The holiday companies, whose salacious brochures are filled with squalid and innuendoes as well as promises of cheap booze and hints of easy sex. No one involved comes out of this sad and sorry story of Brits abroad with honour, least of all the good name of the British in Europe.

THE EXPRESS

THE MIRROR which Ibiza holds up to modern British popular culture is an accurate, non-distorting one, as can be observed in any British city centre. I am not surprised that Mr Birrell said that he was now ashamed to be British; increasingly, it is a shameful thing to be.

(Theodore Dalrymple)

THE BIRMINGHAM POST

EVIDENCE INDICATES that there is a growing generation who believe that pleasure is paramount and their responsibility to society is minimal. But this is not the first youthful generation to be at odds with society. Mods, hippies, skinheads, punks and eco-warriors have all rebelled in their time. However, there lies the rub. They were reacting against the society structure whereas the new generation is a product of a society without structure.

THE GUARDIAN

EVEN THOSE in the West End aren't widely despised after all. Ibiza's natives have not turned against them. Behind the pulse and sweat they see a more complex picture in which the louds are ordinary kids manipulated by a voracious industry.

(Rory Carroll)

MISCELLANEOUS

Stories from around the world

DAGENS NYHETER

Sweden

NORWAY'S PRIME Minister has been afflicted by "depression" and has put himself on sick leave, his office says. The depression has come in the final phase of extremely important budget negotiations, as the Norwegian krone has fallen and excessively loose financial policies threaten to lead to a severe recession in Norway.

The nation must be able to trust that its Prime Minister is functioning with judgment and cool-headedness, in the face of the threat of war and crises. That's a very tough demand. But neither are there very many people who aspire to be prime minister. If the man does not meet the demands, which are fully understood, there is

THE NATION

Malaysia

THERE HAS been a public outcry over Thailand's bizarre performance against Indonesia in their Tiger Cup match in their final group match on Monday night, neither Thailand nor Indonesia wanted to win, as they would then have to play against Vietnam in the semi-finals. An intentional own goal by Indonesia in the dying seconds handed Thailand, the defending champions, an undesired 3-2 victory. Thailand coach Vittaya Laohakul admitted Thailand did not want to win against Indonesia because it was easier to play Singapore, who face Indonesia in the other semi-final today. Meanwhile, enraged Thai football fans walked both the Thai and Indonesian teams punished.

Joy in Isla

Dubious wisdom from the mouths of babes

THE CONSENSUS in the studio at Carlton Live seemed to be that The General had had the best of the argument. It was one of those popular TV debates in which an audience is gathered together to shout at one another as a smoothie with a microphone hops about, stoking things up.

Its theme was the environment, or maybe education, or possibly protest; it was difficult to tell. There were a few experts on hand, and one or two managed to make a worthwhile point during their 10 seconds in front of the microphone.

A sincere educationalist said one thing, a whey-faced Tory councillor said another. But it was The General – once called Matthew, re-launched as the tree protester General Survival – who received the most sustained applause.

Wearing his trademark Napoleon hat and, possibly with the help of the Carlton make-up artiste, an air of rains angels-with-dirty-faces innocence, he delivered his message: he had been sitting at home, not going to school and all, and one day he thought, you know, about roads and all that, so he, like, decided to go up a tree and, well, sort of stay there and that was it.

Everyone in the studio seemed strangely moved by this testimony. The smoothie congratulated The General on his articulation. The councillor admitted to being impressed by the strength of his beliefs. A former advertising man argued that he would receive a better and more relevant education from fellow tree-dwellers than he would from any school. The educationalist continued to argue



TERENCE BLACKER

In an age when logic and thought are suspect, childhood purity has gained a new authority

the importance of learning how to read and write, of interacting with other children and discovering

about the broader environmental issues involved, but this seemed a quaint and old-fashioned view.

The General, as the world now knows, is 11 years old, has dropped out from school, and now lives in a tree as the media celebrity of the moment. Doubtless he will soon find himself in a TV studio with Ashley, the 12-year-old comedienne, whose act is the talk of comedy clubs throughout the country. According to newspaper reports, Ashley includes some dodgy material in her routine which brilliantly and subtly wrongfooted her audience. Does she know what she's talking about? Does laughing at silly jokes about sex toys delivered by a pre-pubescent girl involve one in a corrupting process? Or on the other hand, could she be utterly aware and sophisticated and making a

valid satirical comment from the perspective of a child about issues of the moment: adult anxiety, juvenile sophistication, the media exploitation of children? Nobody knows, so Ashley gets away with it.

Of course, these child celebrities are not alone in the world. Shuffling weirdly behind The General in the Carlton studio was his mother, who refused to speak into the microphone. Ashley's dad is her agent and manager but has confessed to being bewildered by his daughter's ambition and precocity. Rather touchingly, he has told journalists that he hopes she will outgrow the need to stand up in front of an audience and show-off. Ashley's eyes are on Hollywood.

If both these parents seem almost in awe of their offspring, it's not simply that the children are odd

(although they are). Much stranger and more alarming is the reaction of adults, keen with slack-jawed desperation to hear the views of a small person unsullied by education, experience, the mess and compromise of adult existence. In an age when logic, thought and argument have become suspect, and the ability to emotive and to feel in everything, the voice of childhood purity has found a new authority.

The fact that The General has not the slightest idea of the environmental arguments against proliferating by-passes, beyond a vague sense that stopping horrid men with their chainsaws is a better way of spending his time than watching *Home and Away*, matters less than his piping sincerity. Ashley's ignorance of the complexities of adult relationships is

regarded as containing its own kind of truth. It's the tendency of the gullible to treat the words of an innocent with reverence that was explored in Jerzy Kozinski's novel *Being There*, only today, the Chauncey Gardiners are children.

In many households, the mindless discipline of old has given way to a lazy liberalism, in any dispute between a school and child, parents invariably range themselves against the teachers. David Blunkett's laudable attempt to encourage parents to take responsibility for the completion of homework, and his daring suggestion that a fixed time might be established for going to bed during the week, seem doomed to failure.

After all, to impose a structure for a child requires the parent to be an adult.

THE SATURDAY PROFILE

MARTIN MCGUINNESS, SNN FEIN

The hard man talking soft

WHATEVER THE end result, the idea of Martin McGuinness as intermediary between the IRA and the decommissioning body – the role announced for him with considerable stagecraft in the days before Bill Clinton arrived to audit the fledgling Northern Ireland peace – has its own irony. The formidable IRA militarist turned political strategist, McGuinness is the Gerry Adams associate whose involvement in Northern Ireland's "peace process" was always meant to reassure volunteers on the ground, those willing to kill and be killed for the cause, that there would be no sell-out. His is also the voice from Londonderry with the perspective of a Catholic-majority town a Derryman's characteristic self-assurance balancing Adams's edgy West Belfast preoccupation.

Martin McGuinness can now articulate his own journey from streetfighter to politician, and has revised his public persona to match: "When I listen to him now I can't believe how he's come on," says a veteran Northern Ireland commentator. "You should have heard him at the start. They hardly ever put him on a platform. Young Martin was a doer, not a talker." The change goes deeper than the substitution of tweed jackets and dark blazers for the resolutely worn woolly jumpers. Conditioned by advance publicity, newly-arrived journalists once remarked on the cold eyes under boyish curls. They now confess they find the relaxed middle-aged McGuinness "surprisingly" charming.

Later-day charm overlays the original, very different reputation. Like Adams, McGuinness has routinely denied belonging to the IRA. A recent BBC film by Peter Taylor showed the young Martin behind the barricades in Free Derry, declaring his IRA membership to a camera, as he also did, proudly, in a Dublin court. He served two jail sentences in the Republic for membership. All of 26 years ago, the British government secretly flew him and five others, including the 23-year-old Adams, to London for talks with the then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Willie Whitelaw, about prolonging an IRA ceasefire. Adams and McGuinness were by far the youngest in the group, there by virtue of their performance and their promise.

McGuinness has attributed his original conversion to active republicanism to "raids on homes in the city, the battle of the Bogside", and his father's account of the RUC beating a civil rights march off the street in 1968 "at the behest of unionists". He spent school holidays on his gran's small farm in Buncrana, just across the border into the Republic. "Even at a very young age, I could never understand why, when you went over that line, you were supposed to be in a different country. Coming back to the North again was always like coming back under a big black cloud." Aged 15, interviewed for a job in a Protestant-owned firm: "It came to two questions. What's your name? What school did you go to? And out the door."

LIFE STORY

Origins: Born 25 May 1950, brought up in Derry's Bogside.

Vital statistics: Aged 48, married to Bernadette, two daughters, two sons.

Influences: Bobby Sands and other hunger strikers. And Tashunka Wicked (Crazy Horse) who was run through with a bayonet by a US soldier in jail. His dying words were: "All we wanted was peace and to be left alone."

Weakness: Has begun to write poetry. Published examples described sunset from a plane window and sea-trout.

Critics say: "He is like all annihilation radicals: every one the same combination of virtue and psychosis." (Daily Telegraph)

On Himself: "You can go mad, you can be born again, you can do all sorts of different things. I think you do what Sinn Fein has done over the last 10 years: you face up to the very difficult task of how you resolve conflict." (Irish Times)

Future: If a peaceful settlement lasts, how would he spend his time? "I'd be fly-fishing in the Cranna river in Donegal."

described by the irreverent as dedicated to beating the Irish language, "physical republicanism" and Catholicism into their students, the children of the poor. "They weren't all bad, they weren't all good," says McGuinness now. They taught him the words of "A Nation Once Again", but it was the British and the unionists who made me a republican, not the Christian Brothers."

McGuinness, a teenage apprentice in a Derry butcher's (Catholic-owned), worked his last day at the bacon counter on 8 August 1971. Arrests next morning introduced internment. There were gun-battles in Belfast and throughout Derry. At 21, McGuinness was "on the run", rarely sleeping in the same bed twice, a full-time street fighter, and soon the personification of IRA leadership: implacable, relentless and ruthless, in for the long haul until the British were driven out. He became a dominant figure in his own small town very fast.

Tabloids liked to call him "the Butcher's Boy". The Derry Provos in the early Seventies bombed the tiny city's commercial centre methodically, with markedly fewer civilian casualties than Belfast, fueling republican legend that the Derry IRA was less sectarian, more clinical. They also shot and killed off-duty police, a part-time soldier found driving through the Bogside after drinking across the nearby border, and many others, including a series of local Catholics kidnapped and sometimes held for weeks, judged guilty by the IRA of giving information to the police or army.

The Derry IRA used a local man, Patsy Gillespie, as its first "human bomb". Armed men took him from his home, held his family hostage, strapped him into a van with a bomb in the back and ordered him to drive to a checkpoint outside Derry. The bomb killed five soldiers. Patsy Gillespie's body was unrecoverable. That was in 1990, the year Secretary of State Peter Brooke authorised the beginning of secret contact with the IRA which preceded the present peace process. Martin McGuinness was the representative on the republican side, his hardline reputation intact despite the shift of emphasis inside the republican leadership which had begun to make ceasefire thinkable before any British declaration of "intent to withdraw".

The secret contact was paralleled by a public exchange. Brook suggested that government would have to be "imaginative" if the IRA stopped violence. In response, McGuinness hinted at an unofficial ceasefire in return for talks. An IRA source said later that the Derryman prompted questioning but not because "Volunteers asked me what was going on here?" He has the respect and confidence of the volunteers, he's seen as their man. Gerry Adams is articulate, that's his strength. But McGuinness would have to be on the road selling any ceasefire idea. Without Martin, it could not be sold."

While Adams expounds on the new way forward in ever more sophisticated language, McGuinness still sounds as though he has never left the big village that is Derry. The steely militarist likes to talk about fishing. The Catholic family man says he would only leave republicanism if it damaged his marriage. For years he attended a Sunday Mass said in Irish, rather than listen to the then Bishop of Derry, Eddie Daly, who told republicans their conduct of an IRA funeral effectively excommunicated them. McGuinness was once described with exasperation by a local security source: "This isn't how we'd describe him for propaganda purposes. But he's totally clean. Doesn't smoke, doesn't drink, doesn't cheat on the wife, we've seen him like a hawk for years."

Like the rest of Sinn Fein's front bench, McGuinness deploys talent and personality as "the movement" requires. During the talks that led to the Good Friday Agreement, a number of those in other parties commented on how personable the SF's

"chief negotiator" was, especially in comparison to Adams. Where Adams hung back, McGuinness pitched into both formal discussions and informal conversation. Less concerned about his impact on others, said one, "An earthy sense of humour". Another said, "which I didn't expect. He always struck me as a bit scary on TV."

During the Assembly's first and only session to date, largely ceremonial with speeches to match, McGuinness offered the only lightness, joking that he was glad to see Sammy Wilson, of the Reverend Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionists, with his clothes on. The DUP man had been embarrassed a few years ago by a local newspaper's exposure of nude holiday photos. Some thought the SF man lowered the tone, more remarked how times had changed a stone face. Now that warmth is permissible, even useful, McGuinness can be warm and chatty. When it suited to be taciturn, few did that better.

Martin McGuinness, at 48, is still capable of clipping off a question with a chilly finality. There is also a clear sense of someone who has grown into middle age with the Troubles, a theme that Gerry Adams also works as explanation of republicans' motivation to find a peaceable way forward. Many in their close-knit group are a

similar age. They have worked out their "line" on the peace together; as once the line on war was argued, and held. But McGuinness talks about the distance between then and now more easily and effectively than most leading republicans. Recalling that 1972 secret meeting in London to journalists, he tends to repeat the phrase, half-mockingly: "Gerry and myself, we were only children really." Then he remarks that he now has daughters as old as he was then, whose lives are very different, and for whom he wants more. When Adams condemned the Omagh bomb, McGuinness seemed momentarily startled before calling it "indefensible". They went to Omagh together, to the leisure centre where relatives waited for news. One man shouted that Adams knew the bombers and must turn them in. Adams was justified: McGuinness steered him away, telling the man tersely: "They're not friends of ours."

Not that long ago, McGuinness said there would be no decommissioning of IRA weaponry. Even in 1986 it was also McGuinness who described the 1974 IRA ceasefire as disastrous, the leadership who sponsored it "disgraceful". He started the same Ard-Fheis (annual conference) speech with "a commitment on behalf of the leadership that we have absolutely no intention of going to Westminster or Stormont." He is now an MP though he does not attend Parliament. This month, he is due to be named Sinn Fein's senior minister in the new Stormont Assembly.

But few in the front line on Northern Ireland, nationalist or unionist, can stand over every statement made two years ago, much less 12 years back. It is a measure of how difficult republicans find the whole question of decommissioning that, to stave off further pressure, they have promised movement on another demand: that they will try to recover the bodies of people buried secretly by the IRA long ago.

There is one other move: the appointment of Martin McGuinness to discuss decommissioning with General de Chastelain. The general has described their first meeting diplomatically. The SF man, he said, discussed the subject with him in terms of the necessity to demilitarise Northern Ireland including security force installations. Army, police and mainly Protestant-held legal guns, as well as paramilitary arms. Who better to eke out the next fudge, or genuine shift, than the authorised keeper of the elastic republican conscience.

FIONNuala O'CONNOR

ACCIDENTAL HEROES OF THE 20TH CENTURY

4: DEL SHANNON, POP STAR

R&B performers, but at the time almost unheard of for pop singers, who were usually content to reinterpret the products of Tin Pan Alley or the Brill Building.

The morose atmosphere of Shannon's first single, instantly appealing to legions of tortured teens, deepened in subsequent releases, whose titles – "So Long Baby", "Two Kinds of Teardrops", "Cry Myself to Sleep", "Stranger in

Town" – speak for themselves. The tough-romantic urban loner stance of these records, underlined by the picture of Shannon on one of his first British LPs – open-necked shirt, eyes slightly bloodshot, the collar of his raincoat turned up against the elements – is not a million miles from that adopted a couple of decades later by Bruce Springsteen.

What made Shannon's misery particularly poignant, though, is the

fact that it was all authentic. Shannon, born Charles Westover in 1934, was a carpenter salesman in Coopersville, Michigan, playing in clubs in his spare time when he was pitchforked into stardom after a local disc jockey heard him perform "Runaway".

He was never comfortable with fame, feeling himself less attractive than the various clean-cut frat types alongside whom he had to appear on *American Bandstand*. The more success Shannon had, the more depressed he became. In 1966, he took delivery of a box full of copies of his brand new single and went down to Lake Michigan where he sat down and skinned the lot across the water, saying "I must get out".

Later, when the hits dried up, Shannon turned inevitably to drink, and was a recovering alcoholic at the time of his death in February 1990.

Ironically, when Shannon took a .22 calibre rifle, placed it against his head and pulled the trigger, his career had just taken a turn for the better after some years in the doldrums. Performers like Tom Petty and Jeff Lynne had begun to acknowledge openly Shannon's pivotal role in the history of pop music, and he was reported to be about to join The Travelling Wilburys.

The suicide remains a mystery, but the best guess is that Shannon, in archetypal rock'n'roll loner style, preferred to die rather than face stardom again.



THE WEEKLY MUSE

BY MARTIN NEWELL



As soft September drizzle
Fell gently all around
Two soaking dogs regarded
Their Essex training ground.
As handlers from the police force
Marked papers and made notes
The rookie bloodhound sniffers
Shook drops from saggy coats.
A bloodhound asked his colleague,
"You bin long in the job?"
His doleful friend informed him,
"Transfer from Customs mob.
It didn't have the glamour
Of sniffin' for The Plod.
I heard they were recruiting
And wanted back on squad.
They ditched the old Alsations
And we're a safer bet;
Since one fell down a staircase
The rest have joined the Met."

But many miles from Essex
Just off the Breton coast
The King of Patagonia
Raised flags and drank a toast,
Declared a British islet
His latest pied-à-terre
And then informed the tabloids
Whose editors asked, "Where?"

But as the puzzled media
Scanned maps to find the rock
The news came in of Railtrack's
Proposed millennium clock,
The Forth rail bridge the venue,
One, one, two-K the date,
Approximately running
Er... sixteen minutes late.

Whatever the opinions
Of Patagonian kings
The island of Ibiza
Is where it really swings.
There's Ecstasy, Viagra,
Amphetamines, cocaine,
Booze and unprotected sex,
And that's just on the plane.

The poor Norwegian PM
Is suffering from depression
While everywhere but Worthing
Fears Russian-style recession.
The News at Ten is ending -
That's right after the break,
And finally... The bear cub.
Who won't be home. For cake.

DAYS LIKE THESE

6 SEPTEMBER 1989

DEREK JARMAN,
the film director,
writes in his diary

"My aunt Moyra confirmed all sorts of details of family life, especially about Gran's sister Doris who offered herself at the age of eighty to the tabloids as the 'first woman in space'.

When she was five Doris had bundled her into a taxi one morning with a huge bunch of red rubber roses and said 'Buckingham Palace' - then after a little while leant forward and quietly added 'Back door, not front'. Queen Mary had the Palace decked with Doris's roses which were scented.

Moyra also filled me in on Doris's practical joke at the Dorchester - in which she had managed to get the best table for a Christmas Eve dinner after she had been turned down. She had her son impersonate the secretary of an Indian maharani on the telephone.

The hotel's 'mistake' was rectified immediately - Doris arrived wearing a tablecloth.

in and the beams jutted out from the wreckage of their walls. But so far it was only the usual spectacle presented by towns damaged by ordinary high explosives.

About two and a half miles from the centre all the buildings had been burnt out and destroyed. Only traces of the foundations and piles of debris and rusty charred iron-work were left. This zone was like the devastated areas of Tokyo, Osaka and Kobe after the mass fall of incendiaries.

At three-quarters of a mile from the centre nothing at all was left. Everything had disappeared. It was a stony waste littered with debris and twisted girders. The incandescent breath of the fire had swept away every obstacle and all that remained upright were one or two fragments of stone walls and a few stoves which had remained incongruously on their bases.

We got out of the car and made our way slowly through the ruins into the centre of the dead city. Absolute silence reigned in the whole necropolis.

IAN IRVINE

9 SEPTEMBER 1945
MARCEL JUNOD
records his visit to
Hiroshima, a month after
the explosion of the first
atomic bomb

"At three miles from the centre of the devastation the houses were already destroyed, the roofs had fallen

I believe there is nothing in what remains for me to say which can give any offence; I mean to express my feelings and gratitude towards the Catholic body, in whose cause I was engaged. I have laboured to create a

THE WEASEL



How I bravely endured a medicinal diet of the North Sea's finest crustacea while gazing on three-dimensional images of Mars

I GUESS you could call it "grace under pressure". All and sundry have been mightily impressed by my brave acceptance of the valetudinarian life. Though it is sheer torment to such a human dynamo as the Weasel, my recuperation from an infected leg has obliged me to pass my days reclining under a plaid blanket while reading the works of P G Wodehouse. Revealing a grittiness of fortitude that was hitherto unsuspected by even my nearest and dearest, I have steelied myself sufficiently to face up to the regular consumption of restorative viands, even offering detailed menu suggestions and timely reminders when meals are due.

I'm sorry to admit that Mrs Weasel has not shown the same strength of character. After a mere fortnight of poaching eggs, squeezing citrus fruits for fresh juice, applying ingesta to my afflicted limb, nipping up to the newsagent, changing the TV channel as required, dashing to the chemist, plumping up pillows, scouring hedgerows for blackberries in order to secure the wherewithal for apple and blackberry pies and popping to the fishmonger for supplies of freshly boiled lobster, my dear spouse has developed an unbecoming red glow in her eyes, while wafts of supercharged steam eddy from her ears.

Perhaps surprisingly, it was the crustacea which particularly got her goat. A shellfish supper three days on the trot proved to be a trifling excessive for this confirmed carnivore, who started baying at the moon in her lust for lamb chops. However, my insistence on

fruits de mer was based on medical ad-

vise. "Get some zinc into him," suggested the visiting nurse. "Plenty of fish." Despite the gastronomic prejudices of Mrs W, it is just about the pleasantest prescription I have ever received.

Though scoffing large quantities of lobster may appear to be a somewhat plutocratic interpretation of this advice, these handsomely armoured creatures are one of the great bargains of the Yorkshire coast. Go to the right spot and you obtain a blushing *homard* of moderate size for around three quid. Equally excellent crabs are even cheaper and available in virtually infinite supply. Spotting a crab-packed van, I once asked a driver where he was taking his crates of crustacea. "Hastings," he replied, shaking his head at the impoverished seas of the soft south.

However, I must admit that there is not a great deal of variety at fishmongers in this neck of the woods. I suspect that Yorkshire mariners return delicacies such as spider crabs, cuttlefish and octopus to the deep, though we may be too far north for such exotica. Mostly, the slabs are tenanted by regimented fillets of cod and haddock alongside odd northern specialities like woot and ling. On one occasion, however, the charming proprietress of our local fish shop pointed out a mysterious fizzy chimera. "Don't know what it is to be honest," she shrugged. "I'll tell Mr Lee at the Chinese take-away about it. He likes that sort of thing."

In a hoardy moment at her establishment, I once bought half a pound of something gooey with the irresistible name of smear. A mess of hubing, it was apparently part of the cod's

reproductive mechanism, whether male or female I wouldn't like to say. A whitish maritime ooze emerged when it was cooked. Though an interesting gastronomic experience, I doubt if this is the right time to put in a request for smear.

Treated to a copy of *National Geographic* by Mrs W, you may be surprised to learn that I was excited beyond words by this unimpeachably worthy journal. The reason is that it

boys gained an early education in the female form by gazing wonderstruck at *National Geographic's* features on tribal dances in Bechuanaland or fertility rites in Papua New Guinea. "Now what do I get?" I moaned to Mrs W. "Martian pebbles and rusty railings." Inexplicably, she seemed less than sympathetic to my complaint.

I'M PLEASED to report that a fellow Yorkshireman may have helped the world's best-selling horror writer overcome the burn-out which threatened to bring a premature end to his career.

Unlikely as it may seem, the main reason for Stephen King's recent visit to this country was his desire to see a cricket match. Sadly, it rained continuously during his day at Trent Bridge. Moreover, the doyen of spine-chillers found himself thrown in to the company of fellow best-seller Harold "Dickle" Bird. But what splendid good fortune for an artist who recently insisted, "I'm very near the end of publishing my works."

In the wake of previous King novels on the theme of the cornered writer - *The Shining*, *Misery* and *Bag of Bones* - we can now look forward to *Stamp*, the tale of an American author who finds himself trapped in a cricket pavilion for infinity? It is not too hard to envisage the nail-biting narrative. Caught in the rain, the nightmare for an innocent Yankee begins with the fatal words "Here's Dickie..." At first, the subject matter was less than scintillating. Fourteen pages were devoted to a rocky patch of Mars, while another seven were occupied by the caving detritus of the *Tibetan*.

It struck me that this innovation arrived four decades too late. Back in the innocent Fifties, generations of school-

monologue and drizzle drift relentlessly, the writer comes to realise the full horror of his predicament as he hears the dread words, "The day I got my *OBIE* were the proudest of my life..." Inevitably, the Prince of Darkness makes an appearance. "That's Geoffrey Boycott, he's a case..." Such a horrorfest would surely mark the climax of King's career, but could it be more than the sane mind can stand?

DUE TO forces beyond my control, I missed the 21st anniversary of the sad day when Elvis passed from one Graceland to another. To make up for this omission, I have been thumbing through *Elvis: In the Twilight of Memory* by his early girlfriend June Juanico. A recurring theme in this charming portrait of 1956 is the prodigious appetite which did for the titan of rock-aboozie at the age of 42. A typical meal runs to 16 items though June insists quality went hand in hand with quantity: "we had sausage, ham and bacon, well done but not burned..."

Later in the book, Elvis orders a dessert of 23 large scoops of ice-cream ("a beautiful sight at least 10 inches high"). A highlight comes when her mom asks, "Have you ever had red beans and rice, Elvis?" The King is ecstatic. "This is delicious. You'll have to teach my mother how to fix this." Though the love-life of the young couple is less than sultry ("Don't worry about June, Mama, she's a virgin and she's gonna stay that way till we get married"), you can't deny that Ms Juanico spills the beans.

SPIRIT OF THE AGE

PAUL VALLEY

Give your liver a great big smile



Glastonbury is a site of pilgrimage for New Agers Susan Griggs

harsh rhythms of modern life or for followers of any mainstream faith as a preparation for serious prayer. But was it enough?

Certainly, there was a ripple of dissent around the UN conference when Dr Bloom told it last month that religion was not about obedience to a supreme being but about an attitude to nature and consciousness. Buddhists might not denounce but many Muslims, Christians, Jews and Hindus would: indeed the Pope is engaged on writing a denunciation of the New Age.

Still, by persisting with the breathing exercises, I did get a glimpse of the stillness and relaxation which Dr Bloom's courses take two days to teach properly. It seemed a useful tool - whether for harassed humanists looking for a bit of peace among the

was over. The New Age pick-and-mix buffet runs the risk of a being a spirituality which is self-indulgent.

"It can just make you a smug bastard," he agreed with engaging frankness. "But done properly, it brings people to a sense of their interdependence with one another and with the earth." And yet, beyond the pious hope that it will be "done properly", it creates no common mechanism to discriminate to those who float around in its relativist universe.

Below, the hazy plains of Avalon stretched in all directions: it is not hard to see why men and women have, for millennia, held this to be a sacred place. William Bloom fell silent. He realises he has some thinking to do. But then, so have the rest of us.

The curse of the Irish nation



From the speech by the Irish Protestant rebel leader Wolfe Tone to his court-martial by the British, at which he was sentenced to death.
(10 NOVEMBER, 1798)

when the friends of my youth swarmed off and left me alone - the Catholics did not desert me; they had the virtue even to sacrifice their own interests to a rigid principle of honour; they refused, though strongly urged, to disgrace a man who, whatever his conduct towards the government might have been, had faithfully and conscientiously discharged his duty towards them; and in so doing, though it was in my own case, I will say they showed an instance of public virtue of which I know not whether there exists another example.

I shall, then, confine myself to some points relative to my connection with the French army. Under the flag of the French Republic I originally engaged with a view to save and liberate my own country.

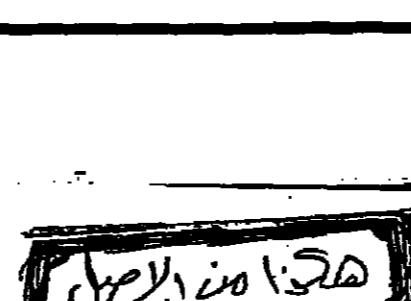
For that purpose I have encountered the chances of war amongst strangers; for that purpose I repeatedly braved the terrors of the ocean covered, as I knew it to be, with the triumphant fleets of that power which it was my glory and my duty to oppose. I have sacrificed all my views in life; I have courted poverty; I have left a beloved wife unprotected, and children whom I adored, fatherless. After such a sacrifice, in a cause which I have always considered - conscientiously considered - as the cause of justice and freedom, it is no great effort at this day, to add the sacrifice of my life. But I hear it said that this

unfortunate country has been a prey to all sorts of horrors. I sincerely lament it. I beg, however, it may be remembered that I have been absent four years from Ireland.

To me these sufferings can never be attributed. I designed by fair and open war to procure the separation of the two countries. For open war I was prepared, but instead of that a system of private assassination has taken place. I repeat, whilst I deplore it, that it is not chargeable on me.

Atrocities, it seems, have been committed on both sides. I do not less deplore them. I detest them from my heart; and to those who know my character and sentiments I may safely appeal for the truth of this assertion; with them I need no justification. In a case like this success is everything. Success, in the eyes of the vulgar, fixes its merits.

After a combat nobly sustained - a combat which would have excited the respect and sympathy of a generous enemy - my fate has been to become a prisoner to the eternal disgrace of those who gave the orders. I am aware of the fate which awaits me, and scorn equally the tone of complaint and that of supplication. Whatever be the sentence of the court I am prepared for it. Its members will surely discharge their duty - I shall not be wanting in mine.



THE SATURDAY ESSAY

What does it mean to be English today?


RICHARD HOGGART

Our patriotism is too often a narrow, unintelligent insularity which rightly surprises other nations

LONG AGO, at school, we used to write on the front of our exercise books our names and then: Hunst, Leeds, Yorkshire, England, Great Britain, The World, The Universe. We knew what we were and where we were; incidentally, hardly anyone included Europe.

In America for a year, our young son, at four years old, looked up after a few weeks and said: "I'm English, and I ought to be in England." He too knew what and where.

Now, in old age, I am usually not quite sure what I am and, in particular, whether I wish to be "British" or "English", or both. No wonder foreigners are often confused or sniffy about our various nomenclatures. They don't usually relate "Briton" to the early Britons. Many Americans think that "Great Britain" is a typical boast instead of, in the 1707 Act of Union, an invention, what Defoe called "A union of policy, not of affection" (as Linda Colley recalls in her admirable *Britons*).

US Immigration Officers tend to look sardonically if they note once again the pompous and metallic declaration at the front of our passports, that "Her Britannic Majesty's Secretary of State requests and requires on behalf of her Majesty" that we be allowed in freely.

The Welsh and Scots have a clearer field. They know they are Welsh or Scots, and if they wish can care little about other official titles. The Scots rightly resisted "North British", which used to be the name of Edinburgh's premier hotel. Luckily, the Welsh have escaped "West Britain".

To settle unthinkingly for most uses of "Britain" and "British" is now becoming unusual. However far back forms of them may reach, for most of us they have much younger connotations. The Oxford English Dictionary recognises this by saying "British" is: "Now chiefly used in political or imperial connections." That fits; it feels official, invented, administrative.

At my working class Elementary School, the "imperial connections" were much stressed. History was largely a record of the achievements of "The British Army" in creating "The British Empire" by feats of arms over the lesser breeds. They couldn't be called the English Army or the English Empire; too many Scots, Welsh and Irish fought in, and for those. Nevertheless such appellations, even in our school years, gave the word "British" auras we did not like.

Contemporaries, who went to public schools, whether major or minor, tell similar stories. History as cricket-and-Empire, the OTC, Newbold, Chauvinism usually finds its strongest home in things called "British". Oddly, Henley, just as gung-ho patriotic as Newbold, unhesitatingly gave all his warlike praise to "England" not to "Britain". Little Englandism. Now we have the British Commonwealth, a tricksy late flowering. And, of course, the BBC: which just passes.

That story was also riddled with class connotations. The upper and middle classes were assumed to be the architects of the Empire's victories, though ably supported by those splendid chaps, the Tummies. Kipling spotted that pattern, and both derided and supported it. Edward Thompson rejected it by insisting on the place of working-class people in our history. Chesterton put in for "the people of England, that never have spoken yet".

Today the pool is even more muddled, mainly by the emergence of "ethnic" into common use: and, more often, misuse.



An elderly gardener in his allotment, a peculiarly English institution

Ron Sutherland

Broadcasters commit all kinds of solecisms with it, especially over Kosovo and "the ethnic Albanians", which after various efforts is the favoured formulation they have arrived at. Are there "unethnic Albanians"?

Generally, "ethnic" is taken to mean here "people of other racial groups than our own" (and probably a bit lower in the world's pecking-orders): immigrants, blacks, browns and yellows. Who has heard of "ethnic English" or "ethnic British"? "Ethnic Concerts" in the community centre would never be Morris dancing. We are not ethnic; we are what we are - English, Scots, Welsh; or even British. This is blank, unrealised jingoism; the sooner we stop using "ethnic" to distinguish groups outside the privileged "us", the sooner we realise that we are all "ethnics" of one sort or another; and neither better nor worse for that.

So I will settle for being "English", though accepting without pleasure the use of "British" where it still has administrative and formal uses. But how do I distinguish Englishness from Welshness and Scottishness, let alone Frenchness and Italianness, and all the rest?

This is an old game in all countries, and usually self-serving and self-flattering. We all tot up our virtues and others' limitations; and all cook the historical books. I like to quote Orwell on the English as "a family", but always add his code, "with the wrong members in control". I enjoy tracing the intricate network of neighbourliness and voluntary good works in every English town. Yet I believe Auden was mistaken

when he claimed: "The English have a greater talent than any others for creating an agreeable family life." Nice; but a rare moment of nodding off by him. The Italians, Chinese, Jews, and many other peoples have close, warm, family-like feelings, at least as powerful as ours.

I am glad if people from elsewhere praise English "tolerance and fair-mindedness" (even when they are sometimes meeting only our phlegm, based on the assurance of effortless superiority). But the good sides of all these qualities do exist, and at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris lead many nations to propose English members to chair their committees. It lies in our reasonable claim to be the mother of democracies and a long-standing upholder of human rights, and our centuries-old recognition that "the poorest that is in England hath a life to live as much as the greatest he". It is not an accident that we have invented some of the more humane, simple, democratic institutions: public parks, allotments, public libraries, the Open University.

I also know that racism, whether as to colour or as anti-Semitism, is still rife here, with various intensities, in the majority; as is readiness to accept a return of the death penalty. Our respect for human rights has emerged from individual humane thinking over the centuries, not from plebiscites yesterday or - if they were held, and it is as well that they are not - that would emerge today. This aspect of partial-democracies we prefer not to recognise.

Compared with the French we are

generally not only non-intellectual, but positively anti-intellectual. Almost all of my more rigorously intellectual friends are from Jewish refugee families. Our own deep-rooted populism is all too obvious in the tabloid press; more sophisticated forms appear in the broadsheets, and across even public-service broadcasting.

One could go on, and not always up. We manage to combine an often bitten-up puritanism with an extremely rough sexuality. We repeatedly tell ourselves we have now equalled the rest of Europe in our public cuisine. Any north Portuguese village restaurant will easily surpass us in providing substantial, well-cooked, fresh food. Our mass catering is still a disgrace.

We have three saving graces. In spite of our educational shortcomings, we still manage to produce some superb scientific, artistic and generally intellectual minds. Our literature over centuries has been magnificent. And when we look at the nature of societies, at the life around us, we are pragmatic, rooted in "business", rather than builders of theoretic structures. We tend either to dismiss French theorising, or borrow its more fashionable parts. The French are more open; they try to discover what they might learn from us. I am sorry to offer a personal example but it is at least contemporary. Some of my own work, especially *The Uses of Literacy: A Culture du Passe*, is used in France explicitly as an illustration of ways of looking at things which they feel they might learn from.

If we do have dominant, but never

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unique, decent as distinct from mean, qualities, they include: a fair amount of live-and-let-live, much charity and neighbourliness (so long as our household gods are not mocked), a nice bloody-mindedness towards pretensions, which can co-exist with accepting class-snobbery from the lower-middle-class upwards, and putting up with rank inequality in major social matters - or why would we tolerate the by-now solid dividing of the National Health Service into two, based on the ability to pay. We can deploy a comedy of language and situations which elevates cocking-a-snook into a national prophylactic, a dry ironic capacity for taking pomposity down a peg or two. On the other hand, we have recently had the Diana phenomenon; and that should make us feel like rewriting, largely unhappily, all the essays written on English characteristics.

The moment we make lists such as those, we have to face the questions: do no other nations practice voluntary good works or neighbourliness? Or respect human rights? Or have an ironic wit? Of course they do. What we may decide to call the "national character" is not composed of qualities uniquely held by this nation or that. In each nation those characteristics, that whole culture, is composed of some elements to be found across all societies, but in each according to a different psychological and social pattern, and so with different strengths across all parts. Looked at in this way, one may begin to talk about qualities as typically English or French or German or Italian or Scots or Welsh with out engaging in disguised chauvinism.

I said at the start that when children in my generation made lists of their "belonging" we always omitted Europe. Nothing invited us to include it. We were not, and not only at school, the conventional stereotypes: the French were excitable Froggies, the Germans humourless jack-booted villains, the Italians rather simpy ice-cream sellers. Very crude, all that, but not far out as a picture of the popular substitutes for thought. Which have by no means disappeared. If you doubt this, look around a Sunday ferry for France full of day trippers, and listen to the ignorantly prejudiced talk of the groups of young men getting drunk as quickly as they can.

We should do better at defining our combination of qualities, good and bad, and so try to live better with them; beginning with qualifying our "patriotism" by recognising that it is all too often a narrow, unintelligent insularity, which rightly surprises other Western European nations. If there is one thing I have learnt over all these years, from living on the continent, from reading and from talk, it is that we are not only English (or Scottish or Welsh), but also and always and inextricably European.

Most of us (including the multitudes of modern "executives") ignore this, are indeed entirely unaware of it. But any adequate definition of an English person, any civilised conception of such a person, must recognise that he or she will be English/European. Over centuries of thought and art about the nature of the individual and of society, about first and last things as expressed in philosophy, literature, music, painting, sculpture and all the rest, we have been and are part of Europe, contributors to and sharers in an immensely rich and living common culture; one (and this is not a boast of continental-chauvinism) of exceptional breadth and depth. If I were a boy today, my exercise book list would start: "Hoggart, Yorkie, Sutherland, Englishman, European..."

We have three saving graces. In spite of our educational shortcomings, we still manage to produce some superb scientific, artistic and generally intellectual minds. Our literature over centuries has been magnificent. And when we look at the nature of societies, at the life around us, we are pragmatic, rooted in "business", rather than builders of theoretic structures. We tend either to dismiss French theorising, or borrow its more fashionable parts. The French are more open; they try to discover what they might learn from us. I am sorry to offer a personal example but it is at least contemporary. Some of my own work, especially *The Uses of Literacy: A Culture du Passe*, is used in France explicitly as an illustration of ways of looking at things which they feel they might learn from.

Back to elements of Englishness. Naturally, we find them unforgettable expressed in literature. Here are three examples, each I like to think embodying aspects of Englishness.

First, Dr Johnson's acquaintance, Oliver Edwards, avoiding all the big attitudes in favour of the quirky: "I have tried in my time to be a philosopher, but I don't know how, cheerfulness would keep breaking in."

Then the poignant old lady who fell left on the shore, lost without friends and the comforts of neighbourhood: "Since Penelope Noakes of Dunpas Hill is gone, no-one will ever call me Nelly again". Last, Shakespeare's Justice Shallow recognising the inevitability and solemnity of death, but moving easily also into the down-to-earth, the everyday: "Death, as the Psalmist saith, is certain to all; all shall die. How a good yoke of bullocks at Stamford Fair?"

BAROMETER

SEAN O'GRADY

Winner of the Week
A close run thing between Tony Adams and Gerry Adams, but Gerry wins by a beard because at least he's renounced violence. Sinn Fein have pulled off a series of peaceful publicity "spectaculars" to match the ballistic variety they used to go in for. What next, then, for Gerry? Mr Adams and Mr McGuinness are elected

Members of Parliament, and have a standing invitation to attend the People's Palace at Westminster, which they have hitherto distained on the grounds that they'd have to swear allegiance to the Queen, and her heirs and successors (an understandable enough reluctance, looking at one of them, below). But the peace process is a series of difficult compromises for everyone. Surely there is room for manoeuvre on the oath (already amended to accommodate atheists)? Gerry's triumphal arrival, maiden speech, Questions to the Prime Minister. Can't wait for the honourable gentleman to take his place, in this most legitimate of targets.

Loser of the Week
Like the jackals in a wildlife documentary going after a lame wildebeest at the edge of the herd, the ITV companies have returned to stalk *News at Ten*. But there's still time to avert the ghastliness of the "Big Movie". Make Trevor McDonald a winner by writing to:

Save Our Trevor
c/o Director of Programmes and
Cable, Independent Television
Commission, 33 Foley St,
London W1.

Dog of the Week
Jilly Goulden is the celebrity most associated these days with the bloodhound, taking up where Clement Freud left off. But the bloodhound is slipping its leash as celebrity Muttley. As

we all know, the best dogs come from Essex, and the constabulary there has proved that their hounds, Sherlock and Morse, have a sense of smell far superior to the German Shepherds usually found on the end of a copper's lead.

Test of the Week
The tasks five year olds are being asked to perform under a Government "benchmarking" exercise seem difficult even for those of us nearer to our second childhood than our first. How many grown-ups, even journalists, are up to these:

1. Can recite at least one nursery rhyme.
2. Ask questions to find out information and listen to the answers.
3. Able to make up a story and tell it. Able to listen to others.
4. When reading a book, make at least one attempt to predict a word or phrase. Who says standards are falling?

Image of the Week
The spade joins the heir Prince Harry goes to Eton. Now we know how seriously the monarchy take the modernising thingummy.



Dr Anthony Storr, an expert on depression

DR ANTHONY Storr, the eminent psychiatrist and writer, knows a thing or three about depression. It's very common, it's doesn't mean you are unfit to run any country (much less Norway) and many people who have it are highly creative and valuable. "I gave a lecture at the Royal Society of Literature a few years ago that was titled 'Writers and Recurrent Depression'. It was absolutely packed out and it wasn't because I was so well known or anything. They had been attracted by the title because half of them were suffering from recurrent depression!" He snorts with laughter. "So it really does click with a lot of people."

But, I say, it doesn't seem to click with a lot of politicians. I can't imagine that a similar lecture at the House of Commons would draw a large crowd. Dr Storr isn't so sure. "Well, I haven't treated very many politicians myself but I wouldn't be at all surprised. Very highly creative people often have this other side to them when they go down into black despond."

It has been almost 30 years since Dr Storr was asked to contribute to a book of essays on Winston Churchill. The result, *Churchill's Black Dog*,

COLD CALL

ANN TRENEMAN
RINGS
ANTHONY STORR

remains a classic. "I thought I would get absolutely panned for it but in fact it was very much appreciated by nearly everybody but one of his private secretaries. He said he had never seen him depressed. In fact, I said that he had this underlying tendency that runs right through the Marlborough family. The Duke of Marl-

borough is not what he calls a psychiatric depressive, he is no stranger to "ups and downs of mood of a quite severe kind". And, he says thoughtfully, he thinks his mother probably had them too. He has the historian's gift of talking about the past as if it were yesterday and speaks of Dickens, Balzac and Dr Johnson (depressives all) as if they were acquaintances, if not friends. "Dickens was the classic example. He was a chap who never stopped, really. He was either going for 15-mile walks in the country or editing journals or acting or writing two novels at once. But if he did stop, he went down into depression instantly."

So what did Dr Storr think when he heard about Prime Minister Tony Blair? "Well, I thought he'd luck. But it is certainly not a reason for getting rid of him." In fact, it may be a reason to keep him. Soon, Dr Storr is delving into yet another book in his library, quoting a German psychiatrist who says that if we removed all depressives we would deprive ourselves of our most valuable people. "He says that, finally, only dried-up bureaucrats and schizophrenics would be left." Dr Storr laughs. "There's a lot to be said for that."

When pure logic is plain absurd

A good paradox can challenge all rational thought. Gilbert Adair suspects he might just have discovered a new one

A man sells off his second-hand television set to three impoverished old ladies for £30, towards which each old lady contributes exactly one third - or £10 apiece. After pocketing the money, he belatedly decides that the television's value is in fact no more than £25. About to reimburse the extra five, however, he realises that he himself will need £2 for a parking meter and so returns only three. Thus, each of the three ladies has paid him not £10 but £9 for the set; that is, £27. He himself retains £2 for the parking meter. Which makes £29 in all. What has become of the missing pound?

That, you are most likely thinking, is a logical paradox. But it isn't, since the fallacious conclusion derives not from any inherent illogicality in the story's premise but from its deliberately garbled presentation. When the thicket of distracting marginalia have been cleared to lay bare the essential facts, the apparent paradox instantly vanishes. By the end, after all, the three ladies are left with £1 apiece, there are £2 in the meter and the vendor has £25 in his wallet, which adds up to the £30 we started with.

Authentic paradoxes are a different matter. Even when they've been exposed for what they are, something still continues to feel not quite right about them. (For a few readers, no doubt, something continues to feel not quite right about the little fallacy recounted above.) We may logically grasp why Achilles eventually must overtake the tortoise, but the way Zeno originally told the tale is not without a peculiar logic of its own, one that is somehow not conclusively invalidated by the abstract mathematics of converging infinite series, even when we're capable of understanding them.

Above all, real paradoxes don't go away. The immemorial Cretan para-

dox - when a Cretan says: "I am a liar", is he lying or telling the truth? - could be detected in the antinomies which undermined set theory in the 19th century, and its insidious self-reference was at the heart of Kurt Gödel's two celebrated theorems of undecidability, dating from the early 1930s, which devastated the mathematical community by proving that maths raised questions that it could never hope to answer.

What this is all leading up to is that I would now like to propose an entirely original paradox. At least, I hope it's a paradox and I hope it's original. A total amateur where mathematical logic is concerned, I know I run the risk of being informed by some disdainfully incredulous reader that it's just a paraphrase of some dog-eared trope settled by the Pythagoreans two millennia ago. Yet, as I tell myself, nothing ventured, nothing gained. In any event, it goes, as cocktail pianists say, something like this:

A businessman decides to have his office renovated and invites two interior decorators to present him with comprehensive estimates for the job. He tells them that he will accept the lower of the two estimates, that they be confined to round figures, and that neither is to exceed £10,000.

When one of the designers asks what will happen if both come up with an identical figure, he replies that in that eventuality he'll simply take his custom elsewhere.

The first decorator endeavours to figure out the best options open to him in the light of his rival's correspondingly best options. He immediately rules out submitting an estimate for the full £10,000, on the grounds that the second decorator will propose either less, in which case he will get the job, or the same, in which case neither will get it. So he considers £9,000. But there too, as he soon realises, he'll get the job only if the second decorator proposes £10,000, which he the second

decorator will rule out for the very same reason as the first.

Eight thousand pounds, then?

But wait. If (thinks the first decorator) I submit an estimate for £8,000, I'll get the job only if the second decorator proposes £9,000 (£10,000 remember, has been rejected). But the second decorator won't propose nine because in that case he'll get the job only if I propose £10,000, which I obviously won't do for the reason already stated. £7,000? No again, since I can undercut my rival only if he proposes £8,000 (now that both £9,000 and £10,000 have been rejected). But he won't propose £8,000 because he in his turn knows he'll get the job only if I propose £9,000 and he must equally know that I won't because in that case my getting the job would depend on his proposing £10,000, which patently he won't. So what about £6,000? If I propose £6,000, I undercut him only if he proposes £7,000, but he won't because that would mean he undercuts me only if I propose £8,000, which of course I won't do because winning the contract would then depend on his proposing £9,000, and he naturally won't propose nine because he must realise that there is absolutely no chance of my proposing £10,000.

You get the picture. No matter how low his estimate, the first decorator is forced to the conclusion that no decision procedure exists to allow him to maximise the likelihood of his successfully undercutting his competitor. The more scrupulously rational he is in his attempts to second-guess the second decorator's reasoning, the less chance he has of formulating the most advantageous course of action. Logic has, in short, an ironically paralysing effect on his train of thought.

So is this a genuinely new paradox? If so, it would appear to me to have real applications in such areas of vexed and vigorous human competitiveness as politics, business, diplomacy, etc. If not, I would be interested to know why not.

THREE FAMOUS PARADOXES

■ ZENO'S SECOND-best-known paradox (after the one about Achilles and the tortoise) is that of the Arrow. Its premise can be stated very simply: consider an arrow shot into the air. At any given instant - which might nowadays be captured by a camera - it occupies one, and only one, position in space. But any object occupying one, and only one, position in space cannot be in motion: at that particular instant, it must be stationary. Since, in the course of its flight, the arrow can be shown to traverse an unbroken sequence of such instants, it is therefore never in motion.

■ The philosopher Euclid once "proved" that there could never be such a thing as a heap of sand. For, as he said, a single grain of sand certainly could not be said to constitute a heap. Nor would adding a second grain do the trick, since no one has ever thought of two grains of sand as a heap. And nothing changes no mat-

ter how many grains are added to the original one. There appears to be no one specific stage of the process at which, by the addition of a single grain, a non-heap is suddenly transformed into a heap.

■ Perhaps the most notorious paradox of self-referentiality is Bertrand Russell's Barber Paradox. In a village there is only one barber who shaves all the inhabitants who don't shave themselves. So who shaves the barber? If he shaves himself, then, in conformity with the above definition, he doesn't shave himself, since he shaves only those who don't shave themselves. But if he doesn't shave himself, then, by the same definition, he does after all shave himself, since his brief is to shave all those inhabitants who, like him, don't shave themselves. It was by discrediting the fundamental set-theoretical concept of the set of all sets that Russell eventually escaped such vicious circularity.



MC Escher's visual paradoxes have intrigued people for decades

Scores, scorelines and parental pride

PARK LIFE



BRUCE MILLAR

year-old Darcy shares my interests with almost uncanny precision: he would play football all day long and then watch it on television all night if I allowed him.

The more serious - and hurtful - charge is that I somehow blame my 10-year-old son for not excelling in my field of interest. This is not true at all, but I cannot seem to shake Tom's conviction.

Nothing I say or do helps: if, on the tennis court, I suggest that he try moving his feet, I am told: "Stop getting at me." Last weekend, playing doubles with the rest of the family, I kept my mouth resolutely shut until Tom threw a grand-slam tantrum and blurted out: "Dad's looking at me."

At the end of last term we were the only parents in Tom's class not to be invited to sports day, even though Tom had come third in the sprint trials. It is not that he is bad at sport - he may not have an eye for a ball, but he is big for his age and physically imposing - he is just not interested.

"Perhaps it is true that I would have been disappointed if neither of my children were sporty. We will never know. Luckily for me, seven-

terest and talent lay, quite by accident, a few years after my experiment with the ball. There happened to be a piano left behind in our new house, and after it had sat there for a few months, silently taking up valuable space, I rang around and found a piano teacher to give Tom a few lessons. Within a couple of weeks he was picking out recognisable tunes and reading music as fast as he could read the alphabet.

Six years on, when I tell Tom how proud I am of his music, he thinks I'm only saying it. What he does not - cannot - understand is that I have to hold back tears each time I listen to him practising the piano, let alone watching him play a Beethoven sonata or a Chopin prelude.

Indeed, I am far more impressed by prowess at music than at sport because it is so bafflingly mysterious to me: a perfectly executed arpeggio is more moving than a perfectly executed cover drive. Music also has a wonderful power to communicate emotion without using words (which almost always fail, unless you are a genius).

It has also given Tom a discipline and maturity of purpose that sport simply cannot deliver at his age: scales performed unbidden every morning, followed by some serious practice, and only then mucking about with his own tunes. At the age of 10, sport is nothing but mucking about.

So, finally, I have to admit that making music is a more worthwhile endeavour, a greater accomplishment, a higher expression of the human soul than sport.

But come on, Tom, even a master must want to relax and hit a ball about every now and then. And that's where I fit in.

Baby Darcy, by contrast, was instantly transfixed and is still, as it were, playing with that ball. We discovered where Tom's in-

MY WEEK

SEVEN DAYS IN THE LIFE OF A CITY TRADER

Saturday

IT'S MY last full day on holiday in the North of England, so I'm determined to make the most of it. Out all day on the boat, then home early to get ready for big "last night" party. In the pub by 8pm. Once there, five of my friends persuade me to go water-skiing with them. By 10pm, I'm weaving - drunk and in pitch darkness - in the boat's wake. After drying off, we head to the house party. I drink a stupid amount of vodka.

Sunday

Wake up at 10am with a terrible hangover. When I come downstairs, breakfast has been cooked and is laid out on the table. What would we do without mothers? Only half a day left. Back on the boat by midday. Huge picnic, for 25, in a quiet bay. The food is basically just Saturday's left-overs jazzed up. Still, we fish, chat and drink. Towards the end of the day, a friend and I are dropped off by boat (Yes! By boat) at the train station. We just make it. The journey back to London is quick (we have a couple of bottles of wine and comfortable seats in first class). We arrive at 2.30pm and head straight for the Blue Elephant restaurant on the New King's Road. Another long day and late night; to bed at 2am.

Monday

It's bank holiday and I'm up ridiculously early (3am). Meet a friend at Waterloo. We've been invited by a client for a spot of sailing on the south coast. Great fun. We sail around the Solent for three hours, including a huge

boozy lunch. Back at 2.30pm. Tomorrow it's back to work. Shock. Horror. The fun is definitely over now. I go straight to bed and read a few chapters of Tim Bell's autobiography.

Tuesday

This is it! Up at 6am. Ouch. Leave home by 6.35am. Thank God I can drive to work, the last thing I would want to do now is have to catch the Tube. Get to work at 7am totally shattered. It's so depressing: same old desk, same old office, same old FT. The markets were down yesterday (Monday) in New York, so everybody in London is very cautious. All our clients want to wait until 2.30pm, when Wall Street re-opens before they make any investments. The media are frightening the life out of potential investors.

Straight from work to Eco - a cheap and cheerful (only a tenner a head) Italian restaurant on Clapham High Street - for dinner with some friends. Then on to the Clapham Picture House to see The Horse Whisperer. It's okay, but it's basically just a chick flick. Finally home by midnight and in bed by 12.30am. That's too late.

Wednesday

On arrival at work, I am greeted by an e-mail from my landlord. Rent's due. How very depressing. It's easily affordable but still unpleasant to pay. At 7.30am, I receive some half-yearly results. Four companies, which we advise our clients to invest in, have done reasonably well. Calling those clients who followed our advice is rather pleasing. Phoning those who didn't is less fun. Pop out to grab a quick lunch and get my holiday snaps developed. Totally by chance, I bump into one of the girls who was on holiday with me. She's just got her photos back, so we go to lunch and look through the pics. Seeing myself on a boat with a beer in my hand, I can't help feeling depressed. Still, it redounds my desire to make loads of money and retire early. That evening, I take a friend - who happens to be a

client - out for a quiet dinner in Putney. Nothing flash. In fact, I'm pleasantly surprised the bill is only £50. I go home to watch News at Ten. Five minutes into the programme, I fall fast asleep.

Thursday

On the way to work, some lunatic in a left-hand drive, cuts me up and almost clips my TVR. Typical! Carry out a couple of presentations for some clients. Then out to lunch with a journalist and a company representative. They want to talk about the property market. Fine by me, especially as they're paying. On returning to the office, I find the Dow has opened down. Again. And the FTSE has closed down. Again. At least I have a good night out. I love going out on Thursdays. Fridays are usually quiet, so I can afford to have a bit of a hang-over.

Friday

After a hectic morning, I have a quiet lunch. I'm taking it easy because I know tonight is going to be huge. After work, I go to an art exhibition in the West End, with some friends. I make myself a promise to take art up as my winter hobby. Already drunk, we go out for dinner in a swanky restaurant. Several bottles of wine and spirits later, we stumble out and decide we want to dance. So we pile into a taxi and head off for the Met Bar. Once again, I'm not in bed until 4am. Despite my resolutions, I'm drunk, tired and back in the old routine. Nothing ever really changes.

INTERVIEW BY ALEX HAYES

Jonathan Mann and Mary Lou Clements-Mann

AS THEY had done so many times before, Jonathan Mann and Mary Lou Clements-Mann were on their way to Geneva, to pursue work that had taken them all over the world. But this trip was more than just another trip to a meeting. For both of them, married in December 1996, it was the start of a voyage into a new phase of their lives, to which they were both looking forward with optimism and hope.

They were bringing to Geneva their unique personal and professional partnership to support the global response to the AIDS pandemic. Mary Lou was bringing her scientific expertise, and Jonathan his vision of a world where HIV/AIDS would be recognised and responded to through a combined, largely expanded health, social and economic development strategy. The new strategy would encompass a broad variety of interventions, from the development of HIV vaccines relevant to developing country needs – and not only to rich countries – to the social and economic changes needed to reduce the vulnerability of individuals and communities to HIV/AIDS.

Mary Lou Clements-Mann was a professor at the Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health. She was also founder and first director of the Center for Immunisation Research at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, and a Principal Investigator in the National Institute of Health AIDS Vaccine Evaluation Unit network. Her involvement with World Health Organisation dated back to 1975 when she served as consultant to their Smallpox Eradication Program in India, following her post-graduate diploma in Tropical Medicine and Public Health from the London School of Tropical Diseases.

Her extensive experience in the clinical research and development of vaccines for humans had led to her

world-wide recognition as a vaccine expert. She was a member of the US Centers for Disease Control Advisory Committee on the Children's Vaccine Initiative. Her HIV/AIDS-related work had earned her a membership to the World Health Organisation's steering committee for HIV vaccine development. She contributed to keeping HIV vaccines firmly anchored in the agenda of global scientific research.

From September, Clements-Mann was on her way to the WHO headquarters to attend a technical consultation where she was to share her experience with other experts on lessons learned from non-HIV vaccines for AIDS vaccines. With her death, the world is losing much of its

New England and in the arid and vast wilderness of New Mexico. From 1984 to 1986, he founded and directed the Project SIDA, a collaborative AIDS research project based in Kinshasa, Zaire and played a key role in documenting the rapid spread of HIV in sub-Saharan Africa, at a time when the epidemic was still considered by many as the exclusive attribute of rich countries.

From 1986 to 1990, he was the founding Director of the World Health Organisation's Global Programme on AIDS, based in Geneva. He made a vast contribution to mobilising the world against HIV/AIDS, becoming a public figure, advocating global responses to the pandemic that were sound, effective and, most importantly, respectful of human rights.

When they died, Mary Lou was bringing to Geneva her scientific expertise and Jonathan his vision of a world where AIDS would be responded to through a full development strategy

collective memory and experience in this field.

Jonathan Mann gained his medical qualification from Washington University, St Louis, having already graduated from Harvard in History, and began to build his public health career in 1975 as an Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer with the US Centers for Disease Control. He then worked as a state epidemiologist and assistant director of the health department in New Mexico. Born and brought up in Boston, Mann always retained his roots both in conservative, often cold

In disagreement with the then Director General of the WHO, on what ought to be done to enhance the global strategy on AIDS, Mann resigned from the WHO in 1990, to become Professor of Epidemiology and International Health at the Harvard School of Public Health. Subsequently, in 1993, he was appointed the first professor of Health and Human Rights and founding director of the François-Xavier Bagnoud Center on Health and Human Rights.

His international experience with AIDS policies had brought the link

between human rights and health to his attention. He was particularly interested in the effect of health policies on human rights, the health impact of human rights violations, and the inextricable connection between promoting and protecting health and rights. In January 1998, he left Harvard to become the Dean of the Allegheny School of Health Sciences in Philadelphia. His specific interest in this new position was to apply the public health he had taught in an academic setting to training public health practitioners who could undertake the practical application of this thinking in a context of social justice.

Hours after the confirmation of their tragic deaths, the staff of the World Health Organisation and of the United Nations programme on AIDS and other friends met in the WHO Executive Board Room – the largest auditorium of the WHO headquarters in Geneva. For Mann, this room had been the theatre of a wide variety of events in his career. At times, it was a welcome gathering place, both for him and his colleagues. But, at other times, it was a battlefield. Here, the battles were often about pushing the boundaries of public health beyond traditional thinking.

They were also about giving the global AIDS epidemic a new perspective, new dimensions and most importantly, generating new hope for what he called a global mobilisation. And these battles were also about putting human rights on the agenda of public health. The struggle was also about building a new World Health Organisation. Today, the renaissance of WHO is well underway.

The last time I saw Mann in that room was 16 March 1990. On that day he announced to WHO and the world that he was resigning his post as the first Director of the Global Programme on AIDS. When he walked



Clements: died off the coast of Nova Scotia, Canada 2 September 1998.

Mary Lou Clements, epidemiologist; born Longview, Texas 17 September 1946; Assistant Professor, University of Maryland School of Medicine 1979-85; Associate Professor, Department of International Health, Johns Hopkins University 1985-90; Professor 1990-93; Director, Johns Hopkins Center for Immunisation Research 1986-96; married 1970 Marie-Paule Bondat (one son, two daughters; marriage dissolved); died off the coast of Nova Scotia, Canada 2 September 1998.

Jonathan Max Mann, epidemiologist; born Boston 30 July 1947; director, Project SIDA, Kinshasa, Zaire 1984-86; Director of Global Programme on AIDS, World Health Organisation 1986-90; Professor of Epidemiology and International Health, Harvard School of Public Health 1989-93; Director, François-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights, Harvard 1993-98; Dean, Allegheny School of Health Sciences, Philadelphia 1998; married 1970 Marie-Paule Bondat (one son, two daughters; marriage dissolved); died off the coast of Nova Scotia, Canada 2 September 1998.

Barbara Mandell

AS THE first woman to present the news on a national television service in Britain, Barbara Mandell secured a place in history during ITN's early, pioneering days in the mid-Fifties.

Although the fledgling Independent Television was not screened across the entire country until more than five years later, her appearances on its midday news when the commercial channel began in 1955 made her a forerunner to the BBC's Nan Winton, who presented bulletins regularly in 1960, and Angela Rippon 15 years after that.

However, by the time Anna Ford teamed up with the irrepressible Reginald Bosanquet on *News at Ten* in 1978, many of those who accepted ITN's widely accepted dominance in the field of television news had forgotten the woman who had preceded her two decades earlier when the organisation was launched as a direct competitor to the BBC's news service.

Mandell was picked for the job by ITN's first editor, Aidan Crawley, shortly before ITV's launch on 22 September 1955. In an attempt to steal a march on the BBC, whose news programmes had for years been little more than radio bulletins illustrated with pictures and presented by announcers who were not seen in vision, Crawley de-

clared: "News is human and alive, and we intend to present it in that manner."

ITN had newscasters who not only presented the stories but wrote some of them – as opposed to the BBC's newscasters, who were essentially announcers reading other people's words – and the new organisation could boast lightweight 16mm cameras with more flexibility and impact than the newsreel companies' bulky, 35mm equipment, as well as natural sound broadcast with the film. Its effect, bringing news stories such as strikes to life, was dramatic.

From among 150 candidates, Crawley chose the first three newscasters: the former Olympic runner Christopher Chataway presented the main programme at 10pm, the barrister Robin Day, who had some experience as a BBC radio talk producer, fronted the 7pm bulletin, and Mandell was seen at noon.

The London-born broadcaster, whose family moved to South Africa in 1924, had followed her late father into journalism by joining the *Rand Daily Mail*, where he had been deputy editor. She then worked as a radio news editor for the South African Broadcasting Company, where she met Alan Mandell, who became her husband and later found fame on BBC radio as Alan Dell, scriptwriter for the BBC's *Television Newsread* before joining ITN.

Like the rest of ITN's enthusiastic but small staff, Mandell was thrown in at the deep end. Once, she was not helped by Reginald Bosanquet, who also joined the television news organisation at its inception.

However, the marriage lasted little more than 10 years. After a short trip to America at the beginning of the Fifties, the couple moved to Britain and Mandell worked as a freelance

'I had Barbara telling the viewers 6,000 troops had been dispatched from Northolt to Cyprus,' said Reginald Bosanquet, 'when in fact it was 600 from Blackbushe'

"As a scriptwriter very much with my L-plates on," he recalled in his 1980 autobiography, *Let's Get Through Wednesday: my 25 years with ITN*. "I landed Barbara in the cart when I had her telling the viewers that 6,000 troops had been despatched from Northolt to Cyprus when in fact it was 600 from Blackbushe."

In those early days, everyone at ITN contributed wherever needed. With Lynne Reid Banks, who went on to become an acclaimed writer, Mandell was one of the company's first two female reporters. With their male counterparts, they were the first broadcasters to conduct vox pops – interviews with ordinary people in the street.

At the time, it was controversial for a woman to approach a male stranger in public, but Mandell was helped by the presence of a film cameraman and sound recordist. She also reported on a Paris fashion show, something that had never been seen in BBC news bulletins.

However, following her first broadcast a day after ITV's launch, Mandell's time as a newscaster was short. By January 1956, ITV was losing money, slashed ITN's budget and dropped the midday news, causing Aidan Crawley and Christopher Chataway to resign in

event, the former national newspaper journalist Geoffrey Cox took over as editor and built on the reputation that Crawley had gained for ITN, and Ludovic Kennedy replaced Chataway.

Mandell continued at ITN as a scriptwriter and reporter, and returned to newscasting briefly to present Sunday evening bulletins, although she eventually disappeared from screens to work behind the scenes, serving out her days as chief copytaster on *News at 5.45* until her retirement in 1980.

Then, she lived in Luxembourg with her partner of more than 20 years, Martin Gray, an ITN film cameraman who distinguished himself with coverage of news stories such as the Hungarian uprising in 1956 but left after losing a leg through gangrene. The couple made travel films and Mandell wrote books, most notably about France, Spain and Portugal. In 1992, they moved to Devon and Gray died four years later.

ANTHONY HAYWARD

Allade Barbara Grenville-Wells (Barbara Mandell), television newscaster and reporter, and travel writer; born London 15 July 1926; married 1945 Alan Dell (marriage dissolved); died Holsworthy, Devon 25 August 1998.



Professor W. B. Gallie

W.B. GALLIE was successively Professor of Philosophy at Keele, Professor of Logic and Metaphysics at Queen's University, Belfast and finally Professor of Political Science at Cambridge and Fellow of Peterhouse.

Although his book on the American 19th-century philosopher C.S. Peirce (*Peirce and Pragmatism*, 1952) is familiar to many, he is probably best known for one much cited paper, "Essentially Contested Concepts", which was published in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* in the mid-Fifties. This alone will ensure his name is remembered amongst philosophers. (Gallie believed it to be his best work too, along with a paper on the nature of science also from the Fifties.) In it he anticipated some of the developments in philosophy of the Sixties and Seventies, in particular the failure

of a programme which purported to establish clearly the boundaries of concepts. The paper formed a central part of his book *Philosophy and the Historical Understanding* (1966).

However, Bryce Gallie probably would have preferred his two books on war – *Philosophers of Peace and War* (1978) and *Understanding War* (1990) – to have had the same impact as "Essentially Contested Concepts". He had fought in the Second World War from 1940 to 1945, and was awarded the Croix de Guerre; he ended with the rank of major. This alone evidently made an great impression upon him. Though a very outgoing man, he never spoke of his wartime experiences though he repeatedly returned to the philosophical aspects of war in conversation.

Gallie was born in 1912 in Lenzie near Glasgow, the son of an engineer.

After taking a First in PPE at Balliol, Oxford, he started his academic career in 1935 as an assistant lecturer in philosophy at Swansea. Here he met his wife, the novelist Menna Gallie, who was a student at the university. Swansea in those days was a lively place and Gallie and Menna knew Dylan Thomas and the literary circle which centred around him. On retirement he became an honorary Professorial Fellow of the University of Wales.

After the war, he returned to

Swansea but was never much in sympathy with the Wittgensteinian influence which was beginning to dominate there, and indeed, he disliked Wittgenstein the man. So he followed A.D. Lindsay, whose pupil he had been at Balliol, to Keele in 1950, where Lindsay became vice-Chancellor and Gallie Professor of Philosophy at the University College of North Staffordshire. Gallie was later to write a book

on Lindsay and the Keele experiment. (*A New University*, 1960).

Gallie, though not a philosopher by default, once told me that he might just as well have worked in some other area. His interests were wide and philosophy was not for him the obsessional concern that it is with most professional teachers of philosophy. His first book was, in fact, *An English School* (1949), reflections on his schooldays as a Classics specialist at Sedburgh between the wars, and on education in general, and he both wrote and translated verse. He was keenly interested in English and German literature, with an especial affection for Wordsworth, to which his days at Sedburgh no doubt contributed, and some of his translations of Goethe are beautiful.

Like his wife, Gallie was a lifelong democratic socialist, who, whilst at

Belfast in the Fifties and Sixties was already aware that Ulster was a tinder-box and never felt entirely comfortable as a Fellow at Peterhouse. His later years were clouded by ill health and by the loss of Menna in 1990. He remained active as a scholar however until the last year when his sight began to fail and he was no longer able to read. He found some solace in the chamber music of Haydn and Beethoven.

Gallie was both passionate and affectionate, generous to younger colleagues, a man of wide reading and wide intellectual interests. Such humane concerns are now rarer than they once were and his death reminds us, poignantly, of what the best university teachers used to be like. He would broaden the context of a philosophical discussion in a way few could and he was an inspiring teacher. He felt himself lucky to have worked in universities when he did,

for he certainly would not have been at home in a milieu dominated by appraisals, "quality" and research assessments. He was a lovable man.

R.A. SHARPE

Walter Boyce Gallie, philosopher; born Lenzie, Dunbartonshire 5 October 1912; Assistant Lecturer in Philosophy, University College of Swansea 1933-38; Lecturer 1938-48; Senior Lecturer 1948-50; Professor of Philosophy, University College of North Staffordshire 1950-54; Professor of Logic and Metaphysics, Queen's University, Belfast 1954-67; Professor of Political Science, Cambridge University 1967-78 (Emeritus), Fellow of Peterhouse 1967-78; married 1940 Menna Humphreys (died 1990; one son, one daughter); died Cardiff, Wales 31 August 1998.



July 1st 1998

Penny Edwards

IT IS not only the superstars of Hollywood who are warmly remembered by cinemagoers of the days when double features were the norm. The stars of the low-budget supporting movie, the B film, had their own following, and among western heroines Penny Edwards was one of the most popular.

A blue-eyed blonde variously described as "comely", "refreshingly sweet" and "pretty as a prairie flower", she starred opposite Roy Rogers in six films, and played Tyrone Power's sweetheart in the western *Pony Soldier*. She was also an excellent singer and dancer.

Born in 1929 in Jackson Heights, New York, she was christened Millicent, but because her name ended in "cent" was soon being called Penny. As a child she would stage plays with schoolfriends in the family garage, and particularly loved dancing. Her determination to go on the stage was such that her parents sent her to a children's professional school. She was only 12 years old when she first obtained work doing dancing specialties in Broadway shows, including Cole Porter's *Let's Face It* (1941), *Ziegfeld Follies* (1943) starring Milton Berle, *Laffing Room Only* (1944), a showcase for the zany antics of Olsen and Johnson, and an operetta *Moritza* (1945), a version of the Mayerling tragedy with music by Ernemann Kalman.

She also made several appearances with the Municipal Opera Company of St Louis prior to being spotted by a talent scout from Warners and given a screen test. She made her film debut with blonde ringlets in the musical *My Wild Irish Rose* (1947), singing a brief chorus during the film's finale, had a small role in *That Hagen Girl* (1947) with Ronald Reagan and Shirley Temple, and was a conquest of Don Juan (Errol Flynn) in *The Adventures of Don Juan* (1948).

Edwards was then given a leading role, and her finest musical showcase, in *Two Guys from Texas* (1948), one of the studio's several vehicles for Dennis Morgan and Jack Carson. Edwards and Dorothy Malone provided romantic interest in this story set on a dude ranch, and Edwards was featured in two of the Jule Styne-Sammy Cahn songs with a vocal solo on the song "Hankie".

Moving to Universal, she was Donald O'Connor's leading lady in *Feudin', Fussin' and A-Fightin'* (1948) – coincidentally, its title tune by Burton Lane and Al Dubin had first been introduced in *Laffing Room Only*. Edwards then returned to the stage with a 14-month vaudeville tour throughout the US, after which she was signed by Republic to appear in one of their Roy Rogers westerns. Rogers' long-time leading

lady, Dale Evans, now his wife, had retired, and Edwards was signed to replace her in *Sunset in the West* (1950). The film was one of Roger's greatest hits, and audience response to Edwards prompted the studio to give her a long-term contract. She co-starred with Rogers in five more films, all directed by William Witney, including one of the most unusual, *The Trial of Robin Hood* (1950), a beguilingly surreal tale of a former screen cowboy who sells Christmas trees at cost price to the poor. When big business interests try to stop him, Rogers rides to the rescue along with a bunch of cowboy heroes including Rex Allen, Monte Hale, Ray Corrigan, William Farnum and Allan "Rocky" Lane.

Lane was Edwards' leading man in another superior B movie, *Captain of Billy the Kid* (1952), after which her contract was bought by 20th Century Fox and she was given the mostingularous and arduous role of her career as Tyrone Power's leading lady in a story of the Canadian Northwest Mounted Police, *Pony Soldier* (1952). Edwards was shot by an arrow, rode in a burning wagon, was kidnapped by Indians, thrown from a horse, swam a raging river and was tied to a flaming stake in the course of the film, which was otherwise unremarkable

Edwards was a blue-eyed blonde described as 'comely', 'refreshingly sweet' and 'pretty as a prairie flower'

and low-budget (the studio used footage from its 1944 film *Buffalo Bill* for the climactic battle). It was an era when television was having a serious impact on film attendances and studios were reducing their budgets and contract lists.

Edwards was next given the second-league Rory Calhoun as leading man in the next film, *Powder River* (1953), a sign that the studio had no major plans for her. She had become involved in religious activities, and after joining the Seventh Day Adventists she announced in 1954 that she was leaving show business to concentrate on religious work ("Penny Edwards Calls 'Whos' to Ross Operas" headlined the *Los Angeles Times*). She returned to acting in 1957 with two more westerns, *Reginald*

*LeBorg's lively The Dalton Girls, as one of four daughters who turn to banditry when their outlaw father is killed, and Ride A Violent Mile. Moving into television, she appeared on Alfred Hitchcock Presents and Perry Mason, along with the inevitable westerns such as *Wagon Train*, *Bonanza* and *Cheyenne*, and in the 1960s was a familiar face in television commercials, becoming known as Miss Tiparillo and Miss Palmivale.*

In 1951 she had married Universal casting director Ralph Winters but they divorced in 1958. In 1970 her eldest daughter, Deborah Winters, later an actress but then only 14, announced that she was going to marry a man twice her age. Edwards said later that she "went through the roof" but finally gave her

consent. "And I thought some of my movie roles were dramatic!" she stated.

Throughout the last decade Penny Edwards appeared at numerous film festivals and western conventions where, dressed in cowgirl attire, she would enjoy reminiscing with the many who would affectionately recall her contribution to the heyday of the B western.

TOM VALLANCE

Millicent Maxine Edwards (Penny Edwards), actress, born Jackson Heights, New York 29 August 1929; married first 1951 Ralph Winters (one son, two daughters; marriage dissolved 1958), second Jerry Friedman (marriage dissolved); died Friendswood, Texas 26 August 1998.

GAZETTE

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

DEATHS

COLLINGWOOD: Vera, peacefully after a short illness, on 1 September aged 77. Much loved by family and friends in England and Italy. No flowers please. Funeral at St Anne's, New Green at 11.30am on Friday 11 September.

SMYTH: Margaret, on 1 September, her 81st year, at Fernborough Hospital, Kent, mother of Andreas and Hermione, grand-mother of Benedict, Mark, Sebastian, Miranda and Benjamin, great-grandmother of Henry. Thank you for your love and for your life. Funeral service at Bromley College, Bromley at 10am 7 September and burial at All Saints Church, Thornton Hough, Merseyside at 4.30pm 7 September.

IN MEMORIAM

STUART: His Majesty King James II, Second Duke of Stewart 1701, at St Germain-en-Laye. Britain's last Stuart King. Forget not this.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH, Patron, today opens the Scottish Caravan Club Rally at Ballater, Aberdeenshire.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

TODAY: The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

TOMORROW: The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 10am; 1st Battalion Cold Stream Guards mounts the Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Welsh Guards.

BIRTHDAYS

TODAY: Lord Alexander of Weedon, QC, chairman, National Westminster Bank, 62; Mr Malcolm Allison, football manager, 71; Miss Meg Beresford, former general secretary, CND, 61; Mr David Brabham, racing driver, 33; Mr Johnny Briggs, actor, 63; Mr Dick Clement, director and scriptwriter, 51; Dr Jack Colover, neurologist, 55; Mr Richard Dunn, executive director, News International Television, 55; Miss Tracy Edwards, yachtswoman, 36; Sir Robin Fearn, former ambassador to Spain, 64; Dr David Finsbury, Vice-Chancellor, Greenwich University, 55; Mr David Graham, former chief constable, Cheshire, 65; Dame Elizabeth Hedley-Miller, former senior civil servant, 75; Professor Julian Hunt, former chief executive, Meteorological Office, 57; Mr Michael Lees, actor, 71; Sir Francis Loyd, former colonial administrator, 62; Mr Kevin McNamee, MP, 64; Sir John Mummery, a Lord Justice of Appeal, 60; Mr Bob Newhart, actor and comedian, 69; Canon Lord Pilkington of Oxford, former chairman, Broadcasting Complaints Commission, 65; Miss Jean Rankine, former deputy director, British Museum, 57; Mr Al Stewart, rock singer and songwriter, 53; Mr George Tremlett, writer, journalist and bookeller, 59; Mr Paul A. Volcker, former chairman, American Federal Reserve Board, 71; Miss Raquel Welch, actress, 56; Professor Sir Denis Wilkinson, nuclear physicist, 76.

ANNIVERSARIES

TODAY: Births: Louis XIV, the "Sun King" of France, 1638; John Wisden, cricketer and cricket records compiler, 1828; Darryl Francis Zamuck, film producer, 1902; Arthur Koestler, author, 1905; John Cage, composer and pianist, 1912.

TOMORROW: Deaths: Pieter Brueghel the Elder, painter, 1569; John Howe, clergyman and playwright, 1608; Dr William McGillivray, naturalist, 1822; Jules-Elie Delannoy, painter, 1851; Charles-Pierre Févret, poet, killed in action, 1914; Group Captain Sir Douglas Robert Steuart Bader, WWI pilot, 1962.

ON THIS DAY: Malta was sur-

rendered to the British by the French after Nelson's fleet had blockaded them, 1800; the island of Heligoland was seized from Denmark by the British, 1807; the Russo-Japanese War ended following the signing of the Treaty of Portsmouth, US, 1905; the first Battle of the Marne began, 1914; the US declared its neutrality in World War II, 1942.

DEATHS: Pieter Brueghel the Elder, painter, 1569; John Howe, clergyman and playwright, 1608; Dr William McGillivray, naturalist, 1822; Jules-Elie Delannoy, painter, 1851; Charles-Pierre Févret, poet, killed in action, 1914; Group Captain Sir Douglas Robert Steuart Bader, WWI pilot, 1962.

ON THIS DAY: Richard I defeated the Saracens at the Battle of Arsouf, 1191; the Pilgrim Fathers set sail in the *Mayflower* from Plymouth, 16 September Old Style, 16 September New Style, 1620; the Great Fire of London came to an end, 1666; the first free lending library in Britain opened in Manchester, 1852; the first

EUNICE KEMP

A service of thanksgiving for the life of Eunice Ellen Kemp (née Frost) will be held at Southover Church, Lewes, Sussex on Tuesday 15 September at 2.30pm.



Edwards in *The Dalton Girls* (1957)

LITERARY NOTES

HUGH DOUGLAS

The fertile season for Robert Burns



Burns's approach to sex was aggressive

SPRING MAY inspire some poets, but it was Robert Burns's lowest time. Each winter his health declined, his spirits ebbed, and only by early summer did his strength and passion begin to return. He fathered a dozen or so children (including two sets of twins) in and out of marriage, and all but two were conceived during the fertile second half of the year.

Harvest time found Burns at his best, when the harvest field was a sociable place unlike today when farmers have taken to piloting grain harvesters in lofty isolation as remote from the world as fighter pilots in their planes. In Robert Burns's day harvesting was a hard, but happy time, with harvester paired, a man and a woman together, to cut the corn by hand, tie the sheaves and set them out in stocks to dry. Burns first discovered love and poetry as he picked thistles out of the fingers of his harvest field partner, Nelly Kilpatrick. The resulting song, "Handsome Nell", was far from his best, but it was composed "in a wild enthusiasm of passion", as was much else that female companions stirred him to write.

By autumn he was able to write "I am in song", but soon the descent into the hell of winter began all over again.

Burns's approach to sex was aggressive, like his response to most situations in life, and he often used military metaphors to describe his sexual campaigns. The infantry and big guns went into battle together and conquered all too easily. His sexual frankness stood out alongside that of his companions: whereas others would go meekly to the kirk with the girl in question to stand before the congregation and be rebuked by the minister, Burns was defiant. When Lizzie Paton, his first conquest, fell pregnant, he dashed off two boastfully aggressive poems, "The Fornicator" and "The Ramkin Dog, the Daddie O", yet when Lizzie's daughter was born he welcomed the child with a tender, exquisite little poem in which he promised to be a loving father to her and brag the name o' t'. Scotland did not know what to make of Robert Burns in his time, and in some ways still doesn't.

Love became the most vital element in his folk-song writing, but it took a perceptive French biographer, Anguste Angelier, to discover no fewer than 25

Hugh Douglas is the author of *Robert Burns: the tinder heart* (Sutton Publishing, £9.99)

Religious impulses are scientific responses too

EUGENE D'AQUILLI, an American psychologist who died a fortnight ago, was one of the most influential proponents of the argument that we are genetically programmed to develop religious beliefs in a similar way to that in which we are genetically programmed to speak a language. It is an idea that cuts right across many of the usual battlegrounds in science and religion, because for the most part the strong advocates of genetic explanations are also violently materialists. Religion is meant to be woolly-minded – "spookist" is the latest term of abuse – whereas genes are hard and scientific.

This is related to the battles being fought in psychology to establish consciousness as a legitimate subject of scientific enquiry. There, the battle lines are more confused. Some of the people who hope to explain consciousness scientifically – Francis Crick and Dan Dennett come to mind – believe that a sufficiently clear account from the outside will render accounts from the inside irrelevant.

Others, such as John Searle and Doug Watt, think that the first person perspective is in principle not susceptible to explanation from the outside. So any scientific explanation of consciousness will therefore have to see that first-person accounts explain things that third-person accounts can't in principle embrace. Thus they can all be campaigning for consciousness to be recognised as an important subject for scientific explanation, but with entirely separate expectations of what a victory would mean.

What have these disputes to do with the status of religious belief? They go in fact to the heart of the difficulty concerning Western religions since Newton at least: the question of what sorts of causes there are in the world. Is matter the only thing that matters? The way this is usually understood, there are two sorts of stuff in the world, matter and spirit, or ghosts and machines. The machines operate according to their own inexorable laws, and the ghosts – which vary in

power from mere phantoms to the Holy Spirit – do their stuff in the interstices.

The difficulty with this theory is that there is less and less for the ghosts to do, as our knowledge of the machineries of nature becomes more detailed. One answer favoured by fundamentalist Protestants is simply to tell lies about the machinery. Hence the denial of evolution, and the endless canonisation of miracle-working Pentecostalists.

Another is to suppose that all our intuitions about the existence and importance of consciousness are simply false, and that we are no more than

BY INSISTING that ideas are in fact on some level physical things: patterns of chemical or electrical activation, the materialist finds that he has conceded to them the power of affecting the physical world. This concession is entirely unaffected by the fact that we don't know yet and may not know for centuries where an idea in the brain can be found or what it would look like; the dream of a Secret Policeman's Brain Scanner, which would allow us to read out our thoughts from the patterns of electrical and chemical activity in the brain is still a long way off.

In a world where ideas matter – partly because they are arrangements of matter – then it becomes possible for religions to become scientifically important too, not just as delusions but as important ways of understanding the world and of conserving and transmitting these understandings.

This was part of the project on which Eugene D'Aquili was engaged. His theory of "biogenetic structuralism" was wrapped in a jargon hard to penetrate, but its essence was simple. The religious impulse is not only a real part of the world in the sense that it can be mapped in human brains; it responds to realities outside our minds and brains. What is more, it is likely to be a useful and informative response. Otherwise it would have been succeeded by others. The existence of a sense of God, maintained in human populations by natural selection in the same way that a gift for language is, argues that there is something or someone real out there to sense, and to respond to.

FAITH & REASON

ANDREW BROWN

Scientists researching the electronic impulses our brains use to carry ideas have hit a glitch in translating matter into spirit. This affects our view of religion

patterns of chemical reactions in specialised cells in the brain. For an optimistic view of this, see Crick's *The Astonishing Hypothesis*; for a more psychologically realistic view, some of the novels of Kurt Vonnegut are in fact written as if we were machines manipulated by chemicals. In one, *Breakfast of Champions*, the hero keeps reflecting that what he had supposed were his own thoughts and reactions to life were in fact no more than the chemicals in his brain.

To be a machine manipulated by a chemical sounds properly science-fictionish. But in fact it is impossible to write a book from that viewpoint consistently. If you want to analyse the brain as a series of chemical reactions, then fine. But you

It is the critics, not the actors, who must change

CRITICS. EVEN as I write the word, a sort of hopelessness spreads over me, an inner voice whispers: "You can't win this one."

At the beginning of one's career (and in some cases, at the beginning, in the middle and at the end), one is so shocked by the whole phenomenon of criticism as it is practiced - the cavalier judgments, the slipshod reporting, the personal animus, the power of life and death over a show or an exhibition or a career - that one's instinct is to fight back, to have a show-down, to scratch the lie.

Letters to the editor follow, and are sometimes published; interviews are given in which the artist's pain is expressed, in some cases, retaliatory action is attempted.

In every case, the effect is wholly counter-productive. When the critic of a Sunday paper devoted a whole paragraph of his vitriolic review of my production of *My Fair Lady* to my arrogance and lack of psychological insight by re-arranging the order of numbers in the score, I wrote a mild letter pointing out that the sequence was the standard sequence. The critic in question wrote one sentence by way of reply: "I could have cried all night."

So I was now doubly in the wrong: making a fuss about nothing, and unable to take a joke. The critical response to criticism is always measured: the critic was simply expressing his opinion. To the challenge that some degree of expertise, some understanding of the matter in hand, might be appropriate, there is always the answer that the critic is the representative of the man or woman in the street, on whose behalf he or she is sending a report.

This is particularly true of drama critics, for whom there appears to be no qualification whatever. It is generally assumed that music critics have some training in music, some capacity to perform it or analyse it technically, but this is not the case with drama critics, most of whom have neither acted, nor directed nor even so much as attended a rehearsal.

Happy *mériter!* - in which you may say anything you like with absolute impunity. Pontius Pilate is their patron saint; *quod scripsit scirium*, their motto: what I have written, I have written.

Does it matter? Is it not all part of the rough and tumble of what will always - we hope - be a controversial business? And was it not ever thus?

Well, no, actually, it was once different, and the difference is the key to the changes that have overcome all the performing arts in this century. In a world in which audiences have lost all control

SIMON CALLOW



tact with the performance or creation of art themselves, they depend greatly on expert opinion - but the more this has become the case, the less expert the reviews and the more purely opinionated.

Criticism has become the performing flea of journalism, an outlet for the prejudices of the critic, expressed in verbal cadenzas designed only to parade his or her coruscating brilliance; the work under review is the merest occasion for this exercise.

This is not to say that the judgement is necessarily wrong: for the most part critics are intelligent, often highly committed people. But the substance of their reviews is rarely concerned with the specifics of the performance or production, and largely filled with general adjectival elaborations - superb, exquisite, heavy-handed, dull - of the simple proposition "I liked it" or "I loathed it".

The result is that there is no longer any record of performance. Just as the art of theatrical portraiture - with the charming and very useful exception of William Hewison's cartoons in *The Times* - has died, the art of verbal reporting has disappeared.

Theatre and dance remain ephemeral arts; the tradition can only be passed on by direct accounts, written or oral. I don't simply want to know whether Ian McKellen was good or bad as Dr Stockmann; I want to know what he did, how he attacked the part, what physical life he gave to it, how he stretched his own resources, what new dimension he brought to our understanding of the role.

It is here too that the other crucial contribution of criticism is failing: the maintenance of standards. Hyperbolic reviewing, in which everything is either heaven or hell, has helped to create a great confusion both within the profession and in the public: things that are quite ordinary are acclaimed as great; things that are flawed but fascinating are denounced as bad. The theatre will, in the end, only ever be as good as its audience, and the critical discourse is central to what the audience brings with it to the performance.

The art of theatre-going needs to be rediscovered, and a new criticism must be an essential element of that rediscovery.



I wanted to be Gene Kelly

Looking for utter derangement? Meet actor David Morrissey. By Dominic Cavendish

He enters the cafe and heads straight over, sits down, orders a coffee and starts to chat. With his blokey clothes (cream canvas trousers, blue top) and everyday looks (red-brown hair, pale blue eyes, slight beard), there is little to mark him out from the north London crowd around him.

If this were anyone other than David Morrissey, such ordinariness would go unremarked. But the Liverpudlian actor has so specialised in roles that peel away nondescript behaviour to reveal utter derangement, it's hard to take him quite at face value. You keep expecting the smile to freeze, the eyes to narrow into a squint, and something rather unpleasant to happen. When it doesn't, it's almost a blow, particularly after watching *Big Cat*, a one-off drama by Lucy Gannon (the prolific power behind such high-rating series as *Soldier, Soldier, Peck Practice* and *Bronxville*) which is being screened tomorrow evening on BBC 1.

Morrissey plays the lead, an energetic man called Leo who is dubbed "big cat" by Alice (Amanda Root), the lonely thirtysomething he woos with a *nos me tangere* restraint that at first seems comically old-fashioned, and then creepily psychotic. He delivers an intense performance that somehow manages to retain our sympathy for a character who engages in compulsive DIY, cleaning and treating his woman like

a doormat in order to preserve the fantasy America he has inhabited since he was a child, sheltering from an abusive home life.

Leo could be described as the apotheosis of a part the actor has been making his own during the Nineties: the man who is "not quite all there". Last year, his portrayal of Bradley Headstone, forever lurking in the shadows of Julian Fellowes's cutesy BBC dramatisation of Dickens' *Our Mutual Friend*, made for compulsive viewing: initially the epitome of stern-eyed, taciturn rectitude, by the end his schoolmaster was a haunted, sobbing wreck.

Before that, he cropped up as Shaun Southern, a tax inspector accelerating towards crisis in Tony Marchant's chronicle of chaotically related London lives, *Holding On* (again for the BBC). Southern's obsession with trying to track down fraudsters visibly started to splinter under the weight of personal guilt.

Looking at the 34-year-old's television CV, it's hard to spot a character that wasn't subject to a similar mental upheaval. In the gritty Sheffield-set police drama, *Out of the Blue*, he showed a good cop, DS Lewin, cracking up under the strain of work; in Lynda La Plante's *Framed*, he was again the honest cop who lets it all go, this time seduced into a life of crime by a rich supergrass. In his next project, the film for which he has been growing a beard, *Funny and Elvis* (to star Ray Winstone and Kerry Fox), he plays a pay-

ology lecturer in a northern college - whose marriage is, guess what, falling apart.

Part of the reason he continually gets to play these obsessives is, he believes, to do with the cautiousness of the television industry. "The turning point for me was a Central film made in 1988 called *The Widow Maker*, in which I played a man who goes berserk in a small Midlands town and shoots 10 people. After that, I got offered a lot of heavy stuff. Because drama series operate on a slow burn, the programme makers want to let the audience know in advance what they're going to be watching, so they tend to want actors to take on similar roles from one series to another."

Not that he's complaining about the niche he's found. He relishes building each character anew, both through assiduous reading and inner burrowing, and savours the complexities these kinds of parts afford. "I don't approach them as deranged people, or villains. In fact, I try and imagine what their ordinary day-to-day lives would be like, because they perceive themselves to be normal, and the world around them as mad. I don't think that is exceptional. You can see people like Leo all around you. They might not end up violent towards others but they might do great harm to themselves."

He denies being any more temperamentally suited to these angst-souls than anyone else: "I tend to play characters who have an edge of depression about them. They are on the outside looking in. There is a side of me that has that, but the same is true of everyone. If I do have obsessive tendencies, playing these roles tends to exorcise them. I never take things home with me apart from my hair dye."

Home is his partner, the novelist Esther Freud, whom he met seven years ago, and their two small children: a world off-limits in interview.

Growing up on a council estate in Knotty Ash, Liverpool - the youngest of four children, his father a shoe-repairer; his mother an employee of Littlewoods - he was fascinated by TV and film, particularly musicals ("Gene Kelly was the person I wanted to be").

A glance at his future schedules suggests that that time may be drawing close. Later this year, he stars in *Hilary and Jackie*, based on the controversial biography of Jacqueline du Pré, in which he plays the part of Hilary's husband, Kiffen, the conductor who had a sexual relationship with Jacqueline (played by Emily Watson) when the latter was having a nervous breakdown.

When I suggest that Morrissey's talent might be more widely recognised if he had stuck with theatre (many of the films he has had bit parts in - *Waterland*, *Being Human* - have sunk away quietly), he shakes his head: "I don't feel underrated. I get lots of jobs. I suppose I'd like to have my work seen on a bigger scale, but only because the more successful you are, the more choice you have in getting challenging roles."

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For once, Morrissey couldn't have landed a sounder character. "He doesn't have a secret agenda or a ticking timebomb. He's a genuinely good man."

He sounds genuinely pleased. If the film finally communicates David Morrissey's considerable talent, and grounded personality, it might be his most cunning move to date.

Big Cat is at 9.20pm, Sun, BBC 1

WITH THE nightmarish exception of Susan Carter in *The Archers*, radio's attempts at horror are generally beaten hollow by the spine-freezing capabilities of cinema. The terrifying exception is a sentence intoned daily on Radio Four. The most resolute of listeners have been known to turn uncontrollably to the off switch upon hearing the fearful words: "And now it's time for You and Yours."

In the good old days before the new schedules, you only had to put up with a 25-minute litany of consumers' whines, whinges and wrongs. To be fair, even its sternest critics would grudgingly admit that there was generally at least one interesting item to keep you going before escaping to the serial

or comedy show. But thanks to James Boyle's machinations, we now have a whole hour of consumerama. That's not a punishment.

Even its presenters sound unconvinced of its viability, adopting an unnaturally perky tone in a vain attempt to disguise the programme's shapelessness. Boyle points to increased audiences over lunchtime but I'm unconvinced. I suspect more people are tuning in simply because only now has BBC Radio begun marketing itself effectively.

Back in 1982, David Hare dramatised the horrors of the ignominious last days of America's involvement in Vietnam in his TV film *Saigon: Year of the Cat* which re-surfaced on Radio Four on Friday

day. Despite the fact that the original starred Judi Dench as Barbara, the outsider embodying the moral consciousness of the piece, it wasn't entirely successful. Some of this was down to Hare's decision to use Barbara to narrate and shape the tale from the perspective of hindsight. Voice-over is a device which sits awkwardly on television but it's perfect for radio which may have been one of the reasons why the producer, Catherine Bailey, decided to attempt the

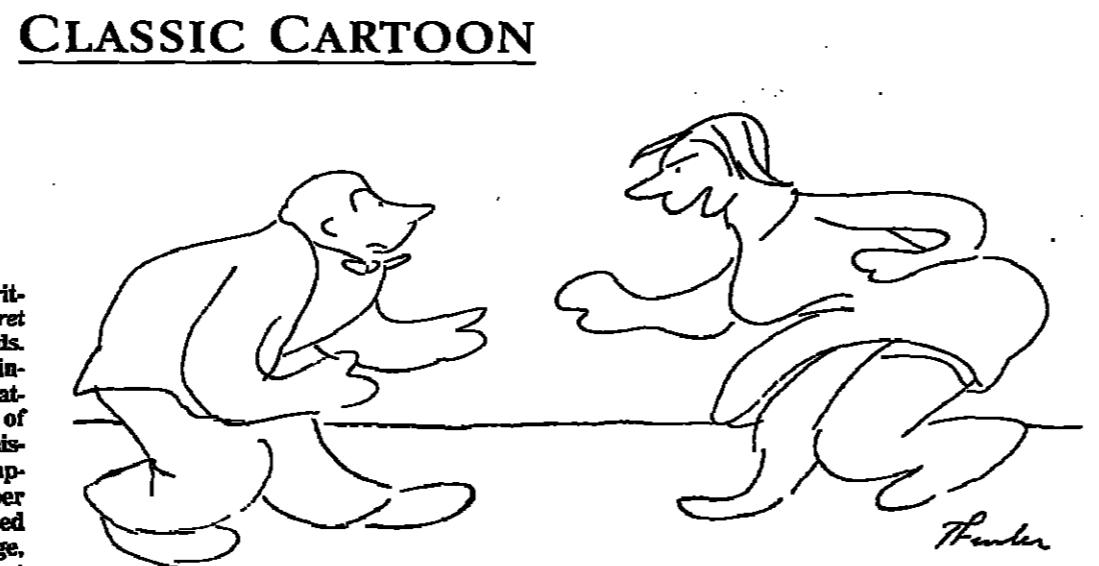
seemingly impossible: that is, put a film on radio.

One of the attractions, apart from giving the script a new airing, is that both film and radio handle multiple locations with ease. The danger is that the transfer to another medium can produce horribly literal results. James Freed's script stuck closely to Hare, with the odd nip and tuck and discreet explanatory line added to establish time and location. Although Hare's original bridge game bids were reversed into "Two hearts," "A spade," then "One diamond," "I cannot imagine."

The production worked fine on its own terms and really scored with almost permanent use of a soundtrack to counterbalance the loss of visuals. Music from America's radio stations was carefully filtered in, including a nicely ironic burst of "California Dreaming" as Barbara (a typically thoughtful and seductive Lindsay Duncan) mused unselfconsciously about the "almost iridescent green" of England.

Scenes were played out against an aural backdrop. Footsteps echoed through corridors, dialogue was spoken against huge anxiety-ridden crowd scenes.

The director, John Dove, even pulled off the climactic helicopter scene (a staple of the genre from *Apocalypse Now* to *Miss Saigon*) as the Americans scrambled to escape. Even at the last, you could hear them refusing to face their responsibilities to the people they were pretending to protect.



"Best two falls out of three, Mr. Montague? O.K."

**MARTIN PLIMMER
ON
JAMES THURBER**

WHEN JAMES Thurber died in 1961, he left many great written works, all small. The one we remember best, *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*, is a mere 20,000 discriminating words. Thurber could render a humdrum scene hilarious with a single unexpected adjective. It's not surprising that such a natural economist should see the cartoon as an ideal means of expression. The apparently dashed-off figures with lumpy misshapen limbs which accompanied his New Yorker articles appear to be the work of a blind man (which is what Thurber became), though with a keen observational gift. He illustrated a world of small, ineffectual men, insouciant dogs and large, motivated women - what columnist Paul Jennings called "that extraordinary, so-familiar territory of bafflement, somehow eased by laughter: the Thurber world".

THE WEEK ON RADIO

REVIEWED BY DAVID BENEDICT

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LYRIC SHEETS

TUBULAR BELLS REVISITED BY MARTIN NEWELL

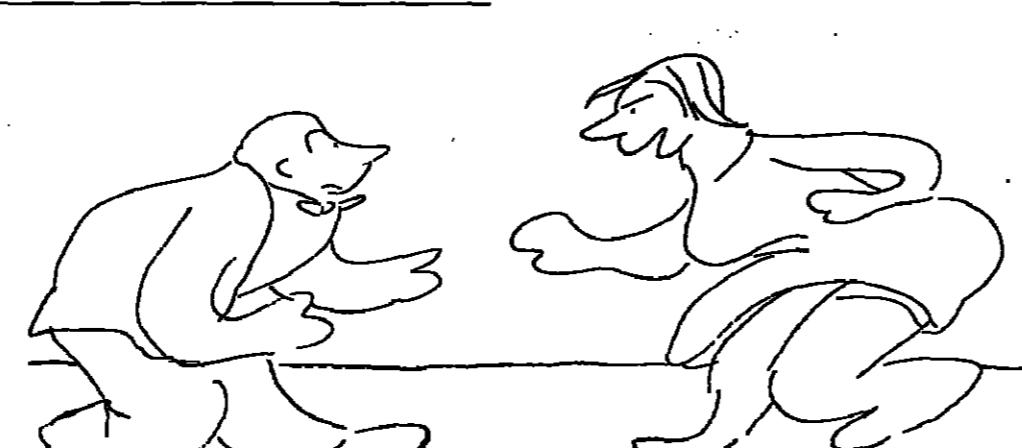
Mike Oldfield launched *Tubular Bells 3* at Horse Guards parade last night. The latest instalment of his instrumental opus is released this month and features a dance beat and techno bassline underpinning the more familiar sound of the tubular bells

Tubular Bells
In Horse Guards Parade
Across St James's Park
The sound drifts over Downing St.
In damp autumnal dark
Reverberates in Admiralty
Across the roofs to Treasury
As somewhere in the M.O.D.
A middle-aged clerk
Remembering the record
Pauses for a second

Tubular Bells?
In Horse Guards Parade?
When he was in his prime
The only sounds in Whitehall
Were cars and Big Ben's chime
And if it all seems strange somehow
When summer's gone you must
allow
That it gets late much earlier now
Good Lord, is that the time?
The piece went on forever
In those days it was clever

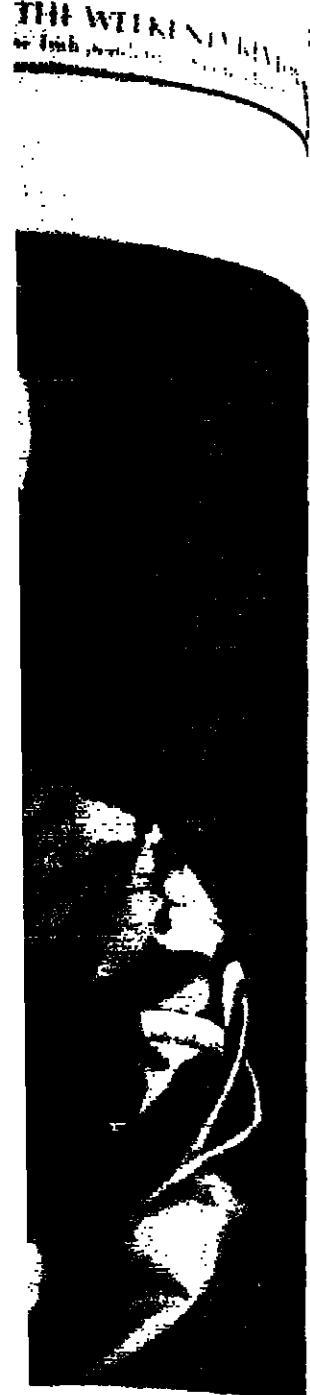
Tubular Bells
In Horse Guards Parade
An added beat with techno bass
The scoundrel's last resort
But in September's clammy fist
Reminds one of *The Exorcist*
Forgive me. That's your train you've
missed
No acid - mine's a port
It's churlish to decry it
My son may go and buy it

CLASSIC CARTOON



"Best two falls out of three, Mr. Montague? O.K."

JULY 1970



THE WEEK IN REVIEW

BY FIONA STURGES

| OVERVIEW | CRITICAL VIEW | OUR VIEW | ON VIEW | YOUR VIEW... |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| THE FILM THE LAND GIRLS | "McCormack's rootless, slightly haunted performance makes the film more than just a wartime shaggy dog story," applauded Ryan Gilbey. "The film swiftly turns noveletish, its potential disappearing into a quagmire of clichés," grumbled <i>The Guardian</i> , while the <i>Financial Times</i> said "Leland's treatment of potentially fascinating material is wishy-washy, merely hinting at the social changes simmering beneath the surface and opting instead for lazy clichés". | Leland's well-intentioned drama over-concentrates on the romantic plot rather than the social and political background, though draws fine performances from all the cast. | <i>The Land Girls</i> is out on general release. Certificate 12. 111 minutes. | MARIE CLARE WATSON GREGORY WILLIAMS 29, artist, Amsterdam "This is the first time I have seen the Chagall paintings live. I was really impressed, especially his techniques in how he uses the ink in the drawings." |
| THE PROGRAMME THE ESTATE AGENTS | "A reaffirmation of the unvarnished grotesques would have been more entertaining," observed Jasper Rees. "More arresting than the goings-on at the estate agents is their clients who agreed to let the cameras into their houses," informed <i>The Times</i> , while the <i>Daily Telegraph</i> confessed. "My heart bled for (the) young trainee agent... though why I can't imagine." | Yet another in a long line of docu-soaps, though ITV must be congratulated for managing to elicit feelings of sympathy for these agents of the devil. | You can see the next instalment of this six-part series, 'The Estate Agents', on ITV on Wednesday night at 8.30pm. | JACQUELINE MAHAL 30, management consultant, New York "They are lovely, peaceful pictures; also some are erotic and dark - all the different types of interaction that a young or new couple could have together." |
| THE PLAY THE PLAY ABOUT THE BABY | "An artful mix of skittishness and seriousness, elements beautifully balanced in Davies's production," approved Paul Taylor. "But it is also sealed off in its own theoretical dramatic universe, where a couple go through the harrowing business of losing a baby without once indicating what set it is." "Terminally and irritatingly arch from start to finish," spluttered the <i>Financial Times</i> , continuing. "Its title is a misnomer. This is a play about reality and illusion... but there is no depth to his illusion and no poignancy." <i>The Guardian</i> observed "more a treasure trove for Albee scholars than something of universal concern... (it) gives the impression that Albee is cannibalising his own earlier work". | Edward Albee's plundering of his earlier work makes for an unrewarding experience. Howard Davies's production is wonderfully acted and full of dark humour but remains disappointingly superficial. | Albee's <i>The Play About The Baby</i> is at London's Almeida Theatre, N1 until October 10. For bookings and enquiries call 0171 359 4404. | SAM OLIVE 17, art student, Somerset "This is the first time I have seen some of his work: some of it was excellent, but some of it I didn't find very interesting, like the prints." |
| THE OPERA THE MIKADO | "This show is quite simply a throwback to pantomime. Eric Roberts's Ko-Ko is pure Northern panto, completely at variance with the comedy's graceful urbanity," cried Michael Church. "All good, undemanding fun" disagreed <i>The Guardian</i> , "the whole cast fly about the stage in a state of ceaseless hyperactivity, eyes and teeth glisten- | Illustrative of the scant state of the D'Oyly Carte's coffers after the Arts Council pulled the plug on them, this downmarket production of this famous operetta is clumsily executed though bursting with brash energy. | Today is the last day of D'Oyly Carte's <i>The Mikado</i> . The matinee is at 2.30pm and tonight's performance is at 7.30pm. For bookings and enquiries call 0171 960 4242. | GEMMA COLE 17, student, Somerset "I don't think the way it was laid out was very intimidating. You could go round and look at the paintings with ease and you weren't overwhelmed by any of them. Some of the comments on the wall helped you to understand the paintings." |
| THE ALBUM HOLE - CELEBRITY SKIN | "On Celebrity Skin (Love) comes closer than ever before to real music," enthused Andy Gill. "It's not so much the music as the lyrics that impress here and... Courtney has pointedly claimed sole responsibility for all of them." "This might be the last time we hear Love so humbled... A total pop masterpiece," reported <i>Time Out</i> while <i>The</i> | Mirror was disappointed by the "cosy, comfy power-pop framework. It's all rather sanitised and safe, and a major let down. The new Joan Jett anyone?" "Aesthetically, there's nothing to say that such wilful self-absorption can't make for great art - but Love's all-consuming narcissism eventually becomes tiresome," sighed <i>The Times</i> . | Celebrity Skin will be in the record shops from Monday at £13.99. <i>Live Through This</i> is currently available in the shops at £16.99. | |
| THE FILM THE LAST DAYS OF DISCO | "Stillman's analytical distance from the disco scene opens up possibilities denied by the heightened identification of <i>Boogie Nights</i> or <i>Saturday Night Fever</i> ," remarked Ryan Gilbey. "This is the first disco-revival movie that makes you want to get up and dance just about all the way through," cried <i>The Guardian</i> , while <i>Time Out</i> complimented Stillman's "expertise with naturalistically articulate dialogue whose idioms, ironies and absurdities provide astute insights into... the young, privileged and, mostly, pretty ineffectual." | Stillman's sparkly take on the early Eighties disco scene is refreshingly unpatriotic and keenly perceptive, while his snappy soundtrack will have you shaking your popcorn with delight. Not to be missed. | <i>The Last Days Of Disco</i> is out on general release. Certificate 15, 112 minutes. | |
| THE BOOK THE QUEST FOR THE FUTURE | Hungarian novelist György Dalos's account of the repercussions of Oxford scholar Isaiah Berlin's brief meeting with Russian poet Anna Akhmatova in St Petersburg. | Mirror was disappointed by the "cosy, comfy power-pop framework. It's all rather sanitised and safe, and a major let down. The new Joan Jett anyone?" "Aesthetically, there's nothing to say that such wilful self-absorption can't make for great art - but Love's all-consuming narcissism eventually becomes tiresome," sighed <i>The Times</i> . | <i>The Guest From The Future</i> throws new light on the conflict between the dissident writer and the Soviet state and offers a compelling account of this extraordinary encounter and its terrible consequences. | György Dalos's <i>The Guest From The Future: Anna Akhmatova and Isaiah Berlin</i> , translated by Antony Wood, is available from all bookshops. John Murray publishers. £17.99 |

A sadist's dilemma - too much thought, not enough action



Despotic emperor with an existential crisis

THERE'S NO confusing *Caligula*, the Camus stage play, with *Caligula The Movie*, notoriously disowned by everyone from star Malcolm McDowell to writer Gore Vidal. The former is about as camp and laughably kinky as a weekend study course in French existential philosophy, which it intermittently resembles. And as for piquant perversities, the most prominent ones in Ivo van Hove's production for the Dutch company, Het Zuidelijk Toneel, are to be found in the staging concept.

The play, here delivered in its first version (1930), is worth revisiting, though. What, it asks, with an appalled eye on its own period, would be the consequences of putting a nihilistic view of human existence into political practice? Caligula's mad reign of terror is presented not as the outcome of hubris but as the young emperor's considered response to the existential crisis he suffers when the sudden death of his sister-lover gives him a

piercing vision of the Absurd. So all his barney, sadistic, arbitrary measures are to be seen, in this account, as philosophy in action. But a man can't destroy everything without destroying himself, and as Caligula bows to that logic, he convives in mobilising his own killers.

Van Hove's production seizes with a vengeance on the idea that the pieces is more about reflection than action, to the point where the drama feels wilfully drained of life. In Jan Versweyvel's design, the Playhouse stage has been stripped right back to the brick wall to present a Roman palace that is like a vast death bunker. Indeed, even before Caligula's change of mood takes effect, this place seems

to have all the animation of a morgue, with its modern-suited men sitting listlessly at dimly lit desks. Face-mimes allow the lines to be muted meditatively; at times, the audience feels so ignored, you have to pinch yourself to credit that you're still there.

An onstage cameraman captures Caligula's progress on live video, though the emperor balks at being followed into the room where he rapes a friend's young wife. Voyeurism has to be satisfied with an ogling close up of the handle of the door behind which this casual barbarity is happening.

Van Hove extracts moments of black comedy from the bank of video screens on which the patricians and senators appear as a disembodied row of talking heads.

Sometimes, it's true, you would need to be Dutch to get the full beauty of the joke. For example, Caligula stages a poetry competition (subject: death time-limit, one minute) like a

speeded-up version of *The Gong Show*. The people on the screens who get rudely interrupted by his whistle are, it seems, leading lights of the literary world in the Netherlands and Flanders - a gag not calculated to elicit paroxysms of mirth in Edinburgh.

Steven van Watzemeulen, who plays the title role, is an actor of great sensitivity and presence. He traces the development of the hero's existential pain most impressively. Or he just kept wishing that the director would let him go more. In the scene where the emperor blasphemously poses as Venus to extort alms from the public, it's characteristic that there's not a hint of a grotesque drag act in the muted handling of it here. "It's all a bit bloodless," comments Caligula of a friend's poetic effort. The same could also be said of this production.

PAUL TAYLOR

The high priestess rises again

THEATRE

FULL GALLOP
HAMPSTEAD THEATRE
LONDON

shows. With a grand manner (and hairstyle) shared by Wallis Simpson, and dressed in basic black lit up by high-rouged cheekbones and a slash of richest red on her lips and nails, Wilson slithers across the set of Vreeland's Park Avenue home like a panther. In the wake of her sudden sacking from *Vogue*, she tilts vases with lilies, prepares for a dinner party, gives great phone, and recounts her thoughts to us. No, not recruits buyers.

Wilson's outrageously enterprising manner has the austerity of Meryl Streep, but she hits you like a cross between Katherine Hepburn

and Elaine Stritch, with her growing whiplash wit. The beautifully tailored script, by Mark Hampton and Wilson herself, is strewn with drop-dead one-liners, most of them wisecracks, and indeed lived-in exaggeration is her hallmark. She doesn't like things, she adores them with a quite sublime but ridiculously engaging self belief. Everything from soft furnishings - "What the hell's the matter with that chair? It looks like Elsa Maxwell" - to Hitler's moustache - "It was just wrong" - lives in the detail.

But she is far less tyrannical than this would suggest. For a start, she is a great believer in vulgarity. "We all need a splash of bad taste... no taste is what I'm against." Wilson's exquisitely timed performance has real comic zest, but it is the unexpected pathos that deepens the pleasure of watching her. As the evening progresses, reality begins to seep through beneath Vreeland's deliciously buoyant confidence. Reading aloud a hostile profile of her in the *New York Post*, she hears herself speaking the words that she is "in her seventies". Horrorstruck, she hurls the paper across the room.

Like much of this almost giddily enjoyable evening, the moment is one of high comedy, but, against all the odds, Wilson's superbly unsentimental portrayal is surprisingly touching. In her droll programme note she informs us that, despite her admiration for Vreeland, she had her doubts as "I loathe one-woman shows". She needn't have worried. The role fits her like an evening glove.

DAVID BENEDICT

HAROLD KING'S programme for the City Ballet of London's new autumn tour certainly makes the dancers work. From beginning to end they are kept moving all the time. And what is particularly gratifying, on the principle of virtue rewarded, is that the new work he commissioned for the occasion is by far the most satisfying part of the evening.

This features music by the gifted and eccentric English composer Lord Berners, whose output included ballets for Ashton and Balanchine. The present score brings together several of his colourful short pieces, including some that he put together for a puppet show he called *The Man with a Moustache*, thus providing the new ballet with both its title and (so far as it has one) its theme.

Mike Baldwin is the chore-

DANCE

CITY BALLET OF LONDON
PEACOCK THEATRE
LONDON

ographer and has been bold enough to present his dancers in tights, tutus and toe-shoes: something rare nowadays even from the most classical ballerinas, let alone one who, like Baldwin, made his own dancing career almost entirely in modern companies.

What he has done, in effect, is to give the dancers the steps they are most comfortable with in sequences that show the whole cast of four couples dancing fluently and brightly, sometimes all together; often singly or in smaller groupings.

What gives the ballet its distinctive flavour is the way Baldwin manipulates them on or off stage, and the unusual phras-

ing of the dances. That, and the fact that at times one or more of the men, and the leading woman too, wear a moustache as promised in the title, usually combined with a bowler hat.

No explanation for this becomes apparent - it simply happens out of the blue, just as Andrew Flintoff's setting of a mysterious, dark moonlit garden suddenly dissolves into giant colourful flowers in bright sunlight.

These designs and the flat-teringly handsome costumes are sheer delight.

The ballet could have played up its surreal touches more strongly, and that would probably have overcome any feeling that it is running on longer than it ought.

However, the dancing is fine throughout. Laura Hussey and Bernat Pascual in the central roles, with (if I understand the

programme rightly) Alison Croft and Dancer Solomon hardly less prominent, lead a cast who all look happy and in first-rate form.

If only I could be as enthusiastic about the rest of the show, but the sheer energy of the company in *Sinfonietta Giocosa*, banging away enthusiastically at Istvan Herzog's shamelessly formless choreography, ensured a warm reception for this puerile work's British premiere.

Neither the ballet nor its Martini score lives up to the title.

Completing the bill was Balanchine's *Dونцетti Variations*, a pretty showpiece that the dancers, led by Joanne De Souza and Vitali Makov, tackled bravely if not always really with enough virtuosity and finish.

JOHN PERCIVAL

Moonlit mystery and moustaches

DANCE

CITY BALLET OF LONDON
PEACOCK THEATRE
LONDON

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JOHN PERCIVAL

THE BOOKS INTERVIEW

The thriller from Manila

Is Alex Garland the new Graham Greene? James Urquhart lets him draw his own conclusions

Alex Garland's two novels have strikingly similar openings. In his débüt, *The Beach*, the protagonist Richard encounters a bizarre, dying Scot in a seedy Bangkok hotel. His second novel, *The Tesseract*, published this week (Viking, £19.99), finds a paranoid Mister Sean waiting amid the cockroaches and cigarette burns of a seamy Manila hotel for the ruthless Don Pepe.

But there the comparison ends. Sean's fateful meeting with Don Pepe erupts into the two other discrete stories in this triad of tales. It collides with the innocent lives of Rosa and her family, and the 13-year-old street kid Vincente, in a convergence of circumstances that are almost inverse to the escalating tensions of *The Beach*.

Did *The Tesseract* start with the idea of Mister Sean meeting Don Pepe, I asked Alex Garland when we met in a North London café, or did it begin with the unusual triptych structure of the novel? "I started with the three stories. The idea of *The Tesseract*'s plot was much less vague than that of *The Beach*. I knew there were three separate stories, and although they changed a lot in the process of writing, that idea was always central to the book. I have a very clear idea of themes – generally, there'll be some sort of argument milling around my head for maybe a couple of years until it becomes more and more concrete. That's the point where I feel I have the themes for the book which I then write."

I ask if his themes are paramount. "Absolutely," he agrees. "I had a clear idea of the theme before I started, and the stories are there just to illustrate the theme."

This comes as somewhat of a surprise, since *The Beach*, I suggest, displays the uncluttered devotion to narrative that drives any good airport thriller. And the limpid, cool prose of his new novel does not feel overburdened with profundities.

He relaxes visibly. "The story has to come first," he says. "I wouldn't want any other 'levels', for want of a better word – and he glances away, nervous of pretension – "to be invasive into what I would hope is the grip of the storyline."

Alex Garland chooses his words carefully. Just as the beach had served as a literary device as much as a landscape in his first novel, so *The Tesseract* could be set in Leeds or New York without altering the themes elicited by his characters' lives.

The basic plot must engage. Beyond that, it is for the reader to unearth any underlying axis. "I try very hard not to over-write," he explains, deferring to J G Ballard and Kazuo Ishiguro (whom, with J D Salinger, Garland cites as influences). Probably the most crucial lesson he learned about writing he attributes to Ballard and Ishiguro: "They don't signpost their themes."

This respect is reciprocal. Praise from both writers adorns the cover of *The Tesseract*, while Jim Crace and Ballard have likened Garland to Graham Greene. "That was one of the best things that's ever happened to me in my whole life without a doubt," he interrupts, proud of the accolade. Offguard, I demur: The comparison struck me as untrue – or, at least, not entirely accurate. I suggest, backpedalling. We agree that Ballard was probably alluding to Greene's exotic locations.

I meekly suggest Lawrence Durrell's subtle shifts in perspective as a closer parallel. Similarly, Garland's motif of the "Black Dog" serves as a mobile emblem for myth itself, and the way in which the apocryphal tale can survive in the domain of popular belief. "It's explicitly evident in the Don Pepe character," Garland agrees. "There's a myth that he had someone's hands chopped off that is relocated according to



NEVILLE ELLIOT

ALEX GARLAND, A BIOGRAPHY

Son of Garland the cartoonist, Alex Garland grew up surrounded by cartoon books. He studied history of art at Manchester University, where he spent a lot of time writing and drawing comic strips. Since then, he has travelled extensively in the East and can occasionally make himself understood in Manila's Tagalog dialect. Published in 1996, his first novel *The*

Apocalypse Now. "It wasn't. It was a discussion of it, a comment upon it."

But surely, there is that point of "amok" that seems to fascinate him, when hysterical violence suspends rational action? He nods: "It's a Filipino word. Several of my friends had read *The Beach* and found the climax [the beach-dwellers turning on Richard and stabbing him with machetes] unnecessarily stark." He is satisfied with this: "It was important that Richard's Vietnamese-influenced fantasy of glamourised violence had its comeuppance. When something violent happens, it is stark. There's a problem in general with the way in which violence gets depicted. I think it's very hard to do it in an unglamorous way."

The undertow of violence emanating from Sean's hotel room, which plaited the innocent lives of others into his own disaster, furnishes Garland with his theme for wherever he is – so some think this happened on his sugar cane plantation, but if the context in which they knew Don Pepe was his Manila docks protection racket, then they think it happened to a dock worker instead of a cane cutter. These incidents can be transplanted – and believed."

Joseph Conrad is the other obvious comparison to make; Garland claims mild shame at having read very little of Conrad, but turns my question to attack those commentators who suggested that *The Beach* was heavily influenced by Coppola's film

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Beach has already sold over 275,000 copies in paperback. Film rights have been sold to Danny Boyle, and it is rumoured that Leonardo DiCaprio has been offered the lead. At 25, Garland spent almost a year grounding himself in science. This provided the geometrical motif for *The Tesseract*, which took two years to write. He is 28, and lives in London.

cause and effect. There's no overarching moral architecture beyond that."

This is a minor vindication of my earlier *four pos*: Graham Greene is at his sharpest when engaging with ethics or contemplating as he recalled in his autobiography *Ways of Escape*, "the appalling strangeness of the mercy of God". Garland, on the other hand, polishes his limp prose with this stark demonstration of how coincidence holds no moral dimension.

Being compared to Greene by one of his favourite writers might justifiably go to Alex Garland's young head, but he remains phlegmatic. "I had a huge amount to learn when I was writing *The Beach* and I still have a lot to learn." The massive success of his first novel has bought him grace to write the next two books, if nothing more.

"If you realise that writing is what you want to do, and simultaneously realise how hard it is to do financially, then to be given the opportunity to continue is a huge relief." His guardedness is typical. "People rise and sink with clockwork regularity," he adds but he is young, and *The Tesseract* is unlikely to tarnish his reputation.

As Alex Garland stubs his cigarette to leave, I can't resist mentioning the set piece that I find most enchanting as a piece of literary cinematography. As Sean opens the hotel door to Don Pepe's gang, convinced they have come to kill him, a vacuum slams another door shut at the end of the corridor. Don Pepe and his cronies automatically kick away, giving Sean two clear shots.

"I'm so pleased you mentioned that," he brightens with delight. "My background is in comic strips, which are incredibly influenced by film. I think in terms of panning shots and fades. That cinematic motif is absolutely related to a similar railway-carriage scene in a Hitchcock film. As Sean opens the door, everything the viewer would expect is that the guys are looking straight at him – instead, they're turning away, and Sean has this strange sort of moment in which he has time to act."

But his cinematic interest knows its place. Has he been involved in Danny Boyle's film of *The Beach*? "Absolutely not. That's his job, and he's better at it than I am. For as long as I'm able, I write books."

PAUL HAMILYN, the publishing tycoon who became Lord Hamlyn of Edgeworth in the New Year honours, must be happy this week. For he has seen his Octopus name raised once more over a publishing house following a management buyout – believed to be in the region of £33m – for the illustrated lists that once formed part of Reed Consumer Books. These included Hamlyn, with which the publisher first made his fortune, and Conran Octopus, in which Sir Terence Conran has a proprietary and an authorial interest, as well as Mitchell Beazley and Philip's: in other words, everything from Ordnance Survey to *The Joy of Sex*. Under the leadership of Derek Freeman, Octopus Publishing boasts a turnover of £45m, 2000 titles and 500 authors.

PERHAPS NOTHING less than the reinstatement of the Romanovs will rescue Russia from its decline. Certainly, it looks as though a claimant to the throne is alive and well. According to *Blood Relative*, the memoirs of one "Michael Gray", published by Gollancz next month, the Tsarevich did not die with his family but escaped to father a child who discovered his real identity only recently. Gray believes he is the grandson of Nicholas and Alexandra. "The true story behind the last great mystery of the 20th century", or yet another hoax?

AND WHAT could be a more pleasant bedtime read than a book on Lenin's embalmers? Due from Harvill, it is by Ilya Zharsky, a biochemist who, for 18 years, worked at the mausoleum laboratory. His father Stalin, on the instigation of Stalin, mummified Lenin's body in 1924 using a solution known as "balsam", a mixture of glycerine and potassium acetate, popular with Soviet leaders. The rest of us make do with formaldehyde. Abandoned since 1991, the mausoleum now survives by embalming the nouveau riches.

TOM BOWER, who once famously took on Robert Maxwell, is checking proofs on an unauthorised biography of Mohamed Al Fayed. Publishers Macmillan will say nothing, but Bower is an obsessive who leaves no stone unturned and it is believed his book, due in November, will throw fresh light on the cash-for-questions affair and reveal "the truth" about the last week of Diana's life.

THE FORTHCOMING BBC series on *The Cold War* with its book, produced and written by Sir Jeremy Isaacs with Taylor Downing, promises to be every bit as riveting as his *World at War*, 25 years ago. The idea came from CNN tycoon Ted Turner, who sent an emissary to Isaacs back in 1994. "Turner was apparently under the impression that he was getting Jeremy Irons," Isaacs recalled.

THE LITERATOR

Low life and tall tales

Carol Birch visits Georgian London and savours the real stink of history

MODERN HISTORICAL novels too often demonstrate an inability to really believe in anything outside our own time. They serve up the past as if it consisted of 20th-century people wearing fancy dress and mouthing a few quaint turns of phrase.

How refreshing, then, to read a new novel that magically creates an illusion of the Age of Enlightenment. Hilary Mantel's *The Giant, O'Brien* makes the past of the 18th century into our nostrils, makes us see an umbrella as if for the first time, and evokes the particular horror of the dissector's craft in an age that yoked belief in bodily resurrection with a spirit of scientific enquiry.

The story is simple, the characters memorable and believable. Charles O'Brien, "the Surprising Irish Giant," emerges from the mists of a Celtic twilight of turf-smoky cabins, hedge scholars and wandering poets, where life is harsh, death close, the presence of elementals and "genies" taken for granted. This is evoked with a minimum of sentimentality.



With his followers – gentle Jankin, impatient Claffey, the boy Pybus and inept impresario Joe Vance – the Giant leaves behind certain starvation to become part of the bizarre circuit of "nature's curiosities and flourishes" who compete fiercely to satisfy London's insatiable appetite for freaks.

The circle widens to include child prostitute Bitch Mary, the Spotted Boy, the Human Pin cushion and What

is it, "a thing beyond describing" that drags its chain in the next room.

Mantel's compassion peaks in the unbearable poignant story of the pig-faced woman, Tamkin Skinner.

The progress of the Giant is interspersed with the life of the choleric and obsessive John Hunter, a surgeon and anatomist. A man "bound to fact and observation," his speculations include cryonics, inoculation and artificial insemination.

Hunter buys corpses for dissection, fresh from the gallows or the grave. Sometimes if the subject is interesting enough, he even pays in advance for those still living but sure to die.

In this world, human beings are chattels. Bitch Mary's hair is stolen to enhance a lady's wig, and the freaks are bought and sold as a matter of course.

Hunter and the Giant inevitably meet: Hunter the new spirit of scientific enquiry, O'Brien the clairvoyant, the poetical mystic.

Symbols of an age pulling both ways, they are not

ciphers but rounded characters. "Hunter has no God," says the Giant. "What's faith? He cannot stompe it. What's hope? He cannot boil its bones. What is charity – eye, what is charity, to a bold experimentalist such as he?"

Nevertheless, Hunter frequently finds tears in his eyes when faced with a body on the slab: "It is the dead them selves who move him to tears ... Not just still, and not just cold, but waxen, quenched, extinct – and gone ... gone where?"

Mantel's tale is involving and beautifully told, enlivened by shifting perspectives and punctuated by the stories the Giant tells, each with the ring of tradition while reflecting some aspect of the novel.

As London at first affords a living to this dignified "aristocrat of height", ultimately it betrays him as his novelty wears off and his value depreciates: "Every night ... the Giant dreamed of the Edible House. The travellers who arrive at the house begin by eating it, but it ends by eating them."

KITTY & VIRGIL, promises a simple, tender story, probably of love. And so it is. But that unusual Latin name, with its echo of the great poet, hints at more, and there is much more.

In Paul Bailey's novel, *Kitty* is a middle-aged Englishwoman, editor and indexer. She is also a bohemian and a bit of an ex-hippy, and twin sister of the appalling Daisy, who is her polar opposite: sensible, bossy and full of rage, permanently attacking the world for not being the orderly place she requires.

Kitty wakes up after a hysterectomy to see a stranger smiling at her. Nine months later she re-meets him in Green Park, where he is picking up litter on a spike. He is Virgil: a dissident poet escaped from Ceausescu's Romania; desperately thin, shabby and neurotic, and immediately, her lover.

They have two years of happiness, during which his literally undurable story slowly emerges; at the end of which he is able, for the first time, to spend the whole night with her. At the end of this time, too, comes Christmas 1989 and the

sequences – there can be no real future despite their longing and love.

It was therefore, extraordinarily brave of Paul Bailey to put these two worlds in one book, where they could have been just as incompatible. But he does it, as daringly as *Kitty*, and it works, because he understands them both so well.

We already know how sharp he is on English life and character, and the portraits here – perhaps above all the voices here – are glorious. Dreadful, pathetic Daisy, her dull, faceless husband Cecil and their embarrassed children; best of all, Kitty and Daisy's fabulously vain and shallow father Felix, and his wicked, kind companion Derek. More surprising is the sureness of touch about Romania. The pictures of the gruesome Conductor, the scenes between Virgil and his enemy the Securitate agent Corneliu – all are utterly real, both absurd and harrowing.

Finally, the scenes between Virgil and his family are utterly real too. At first I feared this

could be the novel's danger point: the weighty horrors of recent Romanian history set against the subtle, funny horrors of English family betrayals. But it was, instead, the point.

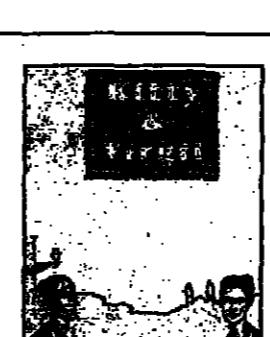
Virgil has a good mother and a bad father, like *Kitty*; and like *Kitty* he is the sensitive child, with a sensible brother. But the degree of the mother's goodness and (especially) the father's badness, and the consequences for the child's sensitivity, are simply on a different scale in the war world than in the peace one. It is (once again) brave of Bailey to show this to British readers; and fortunate for us that he is a writer of such power that we believe him.

He has written a book about the destructiveness of intolerance, selfishness and the lust for power, and about the redeeming power of tolerance, love and pity, in both worlds.

The story of *Kitty* and *Virgil* is deeply romantic. But the fact that they cannot, in the end, be saved by love and peace from the consequences of intolerance and war is deeply pessimistic; and, I'm afraid, deeply true.

Romanian rhapsody

Carole Angier admires a plot that unites tragic East with comic West



fall of Ceausescu, which they watch together on television. A week later he is gone, and a few months after that he is dead.

All this we know from the start; we even guess very soon that he has taken his own life. Even *Kitty*'s love could not cure what he suffered from.

That hysterectomy was no accident, for in their two worlds – one of peace and the other of war, one of endless time and shades of grey, the other of harsh choices and harsher con-

NEW AUTHORS

An immodest proposer

Christopher Hope is delighted to meet the savage Dr Swift, large as life and twice as strange



Jonathan Swift
by Victoria Glendinning
Hutchinson, £20, 324pp

Jonathan Swift did not merely attack the inhumanity of man. As he never did things by halves, he entered into it as well. Swift was a very good hater; his genius was for insult, for invective. But it was founded on a good deal of self-loathing. He was a fistful of contradictions: a Dubliner with English ambitions; a Protestant with Irish sympathies; a cleric who, perhaps, did not believe in God.

In her new life of Swift, Victoria Glendinning's greatest strength might be called wise restraint. She has read the sources; and then happily thrown out whole reams of stuff. She has not got bogged down in the letters. Letter-writing was a kind of tic in the 18th century. People wrote wadges of them, and Swift's letters to his London friends, John Gay and Alexander Pope, throw little light on this strange, furious man. Glendinning has tried, instead, for an impressionistic fitness. And that is what she gets. The great Dean swims out of the dark; this is a portrait of pointed insights, vivid hauntings, wild accents and sympathetic sightings.

Such agility is absolutely necessary. With Swift, everything runs counter to conventional expectations – even his dates. He was born in 1667 and died in 1745, and though this suggests a man of the Enlightenment, he reaches back to earlier, more “fanatic” times. Just as he reaches forward to our own barbarous age. He hated the two-party system. Yet he sold his pen to the Tories, hoping preferment lay that way. But he might have served the Whigs just as well. And he was extremely rude about both parties.

Queen Anne's London, from 1710 to 1714, saw him top pampheteer in the war against the Whigs. These were his glory years. As Glendinning points out, it was a remarkable achievement for a country curate from distant Dublin. He was the first political spin-doctor; the Tories' own Prince of Darkness.

Anyone out of Africa will recognise the innate tribalism of English affairs – Jacobite and Royalist – that Swift knew so well. Assassination, by any means, was his yardstick; graft and corruption its useful oil.

Victoria Glendinning is never too respectful. Never too kind, either. And



With *Gulliver's Travels*, Swift had 'heated up to magnificent loathing'

that's a relief. Swift wasn't after money. Slipping him a brown paper envelope got you nowhere. Yet the Doctor had his price. He hoped, expected an English bishopric – and a big one.

It never came. Swift returned to Ireland, and exile, and took what he could get, the Deaneacy of St Patrick's in Dublin. He was a very doubtful patriot, too. If anything, he grew to be related to Ireland by rage. And how well one draws Swift depends largely on how well one draws his Ireland.

One of the pleasures of this compact life is Victoria Glendinning's extraordinary knack for making such intangibles palpable. She prefers plain words and homely examples. Swift would have liked that. Think of Ireland, she says, as a kind of new-world colony, like Virginia. Or better still, like Kenya of the Twenties.

Exactly so. Ireland existed to be settled, plundered, bought and sold. Sometimes the bold migrated – more

often the second-best. A colony was a place where “settlers” were given every encouragement to rip off the natives, and call it upliftment. Those who could barely cross the road unaided “at home” lived well at half the price.

Swift did pretty well out of it. But Ireland hurt him into life. The world, seen from Ireland, sickened him.

There had been boisterous rudeness in his English broadsides. Now he got down to business. He warmed up with *The Drapier's Letters*. With *Gulliver's Travels*, he had heated up to magnificent loathing we now call “Swiftian”. Human beings, the King of Brobdingnag pointed out to Gulliver, are probably the most odious race of little vermin ever to have crawled upon the face of the earth. Such is the genius of Swift's peculiar calm fury that one always feels the King was putting things rather mildly.

Swift famously rated horses more highly than humans. The Houyhnhnms were superior to the bestial Yahoos in honesty, civility, sagacity. But the Dean was the father of both – and a very dark horse himself. He was a clergyman, an Irishman, and a madman. Sometimes all at once. And he was never an agreeable man.

Glendinning never sentimentalised him. He was abrupt, obsessed with cleanliness, brutal to the women who loved him. He spent much of his last decade ill, deaf, increasingly demented. She casts a cool eye over the coprophiliac anguish of the late poems, in particular Strehoun's notorious lament: “Oh Celia, Celia, Celia, shits!”

She estimates that the “dirty” poems add up to just 3.33 per cent of his verse. The oddest thing about them is the way they continue to give offence, even in our own times. When every crime, from the sadistic liquidation of peoples to the methodical murder of infants, has been pursued with a diligence to make a Yahoo blush.

How odd, and consoling, that Swift's scatologies can still scandalise.

How does one explain his force, his saving grace? Why do his readers feel such gratitude for this rough, dangerous, demented man? How can someone so awful be so cleansing?

Victoria Glendinning reaches for contemporary parallels. And that is right because Swift is shockingly modern, though I think she is wrong to fetch on Quentin Tarantino. Blowing holes in human beings is merely Hollywood horror. Tarantino aims no higher, or lower, than the testosterone levels of his target market.

Swift far more closely resembles Lear – in his anger, childlessness and his cloying yet monstrous hold on the women who loved him. Glendinning is wonderfully sharp and sympathetic on lies, sex, and obfuscation.

There was Esther Johnson, “Stella” of the famous *Journal*; whom Swift met when she was eight. And he went on talking and writing to her in excruciating babbletalk for the rest of her life. There was the passionate Hester van Homrigh, “Vanessa”, of the long poem “Cadenus and Vanessa”.

Both women loved him, and followed him into exile in Ireland. He may have married the first, and slept with the second. Or not. What is sure is that he bullied them both cruelly. Swift was a pincher, a pusher and, perhaps, even a beater of women. In Glendinning's chilling line: “On a woman's thin shoulder is the shadow of a bruiser.”

That is Glendinning's method: quick, clear-eyed, unsentimental, deeply sympathetic. She is after the very shape, step and sound of the man. His lines, his wigs, his speaking voice, his appalling habits, his way of going for the jugular, his helpless wanton rage. But anger is only useful for writer if turned to some point. Swift's way is paradoxical: as his rage mounts, as his spleen overflows, so his prose cools, its temperature drops until, rather as a gas does, it liquifies into the fluid icy weapon he wields like a cauterising knife.

It was never better deployed than in “A Modest Proposal”, where mass murder is married to good housekeeping. And feeding factory-farmed, freshly-cooked babyflesh “delicious, nourishing and wholesome” to the starving Irish, is urged with all the suave earnestness of a Mrs Beeton run mad. Swift's cold eye and loving, outrageous cadences are half his genius; the other is to use, with a vengeance, the very thing he hates – the obscenity of sweet reason in the face of human suffering.

Victoria Glendinning begins this splendid, poignant life with a confession of failure. Jonathan Swift, she regrets, is out of sight, and “his mocking voice is hanging in the silent air”.

Not entirely. Her proposal is fittingly modest. She aims for “a written portrait”, built of plain words in good order. And she succeeds wonderfully. But in this intimate seance with the Dean's shade, she does something remarkable. She summons up a speaking likeness.

INSPIRATIONS

NOVELIST JUSTIN CARTWRIGHT

The music

I listen to Bruce Springsteen and Leonard Cohen when I am writing; perversely, I find them uplifting. But the music that influenced me most profoundly was the choral music of my school years in South Africa. I still hate it, above all the sound of the organ which seems to me industrial, windy and undiscriminating.



The play

The most purely theatrical performance I ever had was Peter Pan when I was ten: 30 years later at the Barbican, in the first run of the RSC production, I saw it again. It re-opened a direct line to childhood.

The place

I was at school for nine long years under the shadows of Table Mountain outside Cape Town. Every gully and cliff and clump of trees was familiar to me. I found the restless mountain sinister; if I had known what an animalist was I would have been one.

Of what architects called “built landscapes”, Soho is my favourite. Almost every day of my life I pass through and feel better for it, refreshed and amused.

Bernardo Bertolucci's *The Conformist* is a movie I think about often. *The Conformist* is a wonderful film, better than the novel by Alberto Moravia, and very moving. When I first saw it, it chimed with everything I believed about life, movies and human relationships – at that time.

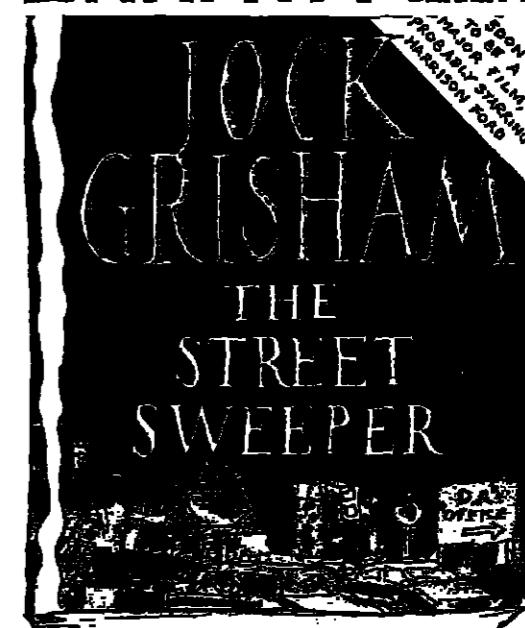
The artwork

I have had no Damascene relations with works of art. But *Early Sunday Morning* by Edward Hopper is my favourite painting. I find it extraordinary that a painting so still could be so vibrant.

Justin Cartwright's new novel *Leading the Cheers* will be published on 17 September by Sceptre

ERRATA

BY FELIX BENNETT



Another blockbuster from the novelist/dustman. Will the public never tire of epics about glamorous, high-powered municipal hygiene operatives?

Capital's high interest

A WEEK IN BOOKS



BOYD TONKIN
Serious novelists used to understand serious money. They should try to do so again

So, in A S Byatt's *Boobs Tower*, an adult literature student complains that plenty of modern novels dwell on “sex and love and God and food” but very few embrace the world of “commodities and machinery and property”. For that reason (among others) a horde of critics will be sinking their fund of hope into Tom Wolfe's forthcoming panorama of the way we live now, *A Man in Full*.

Yet Byatt's student, as her novel proves, voices a false polarity. The caustic novelists will know how to connect sex, love (and even God) with the realm of commodities and property – or “telegrams and anger”, as Forster put it in *Hawards End*. While we wait for Wolfe, readers who believe that the fictional imagination need not rule out economic literacy could do much worse

than invest some time in Elliot Perman's first novel, *Three Dollars* (Faber, £9.99).

Perman is a Melbourne barrister whose impressive début follows the fortunes of a modest yuppie household as the late-Eighties boom turns to bust. Aged 38 and with a sick young daughter, its decent narrator finds himself with just those three bucks to his name. This cautionary tale of “the last convulsions of the middle class as the sun set on the second millennium” requires no Maxwellian ogre, no Leesonesque shark, to make its case. It features no braying brokers or champagne-swilling speculators. And, most perceptively, it frames the break-up of its hero's overmortgaged paradise within the very public sector that would once have kept a distance from the market and its fickle moods.

Eddie is a nice guy who wants to play by the rules, despite his borderline-depressive fixation on those doomy rockers Joy Division. Trained as a chemical engineer, he sets up home with the usual prompting from families and banks, they buy heavily into an Australian suburban dream that differs not a jot from its counterpart in Surrey or Long Island – itself a telling political point.

Neither does the couple step aboard the market rollercoaster of their time. He chooses to work as an environmental inspector for the civil service; she teaches politics in an untutored post.

Then the rules change. Both come under the cosh as

the let-it-rip fashions of the late Eighties subvert the institutions of the State. (In Australia, remember, it was a Labour government that did the dirty work.) Eddie is downsized into redundancy when he blows the whistle on a corrupt deal that his boss has struck with a muck-spreading mining magnate; after all, “deregulation is the only game in town”. Tanya forgoes her fragile job as her university opts for the catchpenny delights of what she terms “Hospitality and Tarantino Studies”.

Soon, debts multiply and snap around their heels “like terriers”. Friedrich Von Hayek, concludes Eddie as the market fever does its damnedest to destroy him, “never addressed the purchase of a little girl's overcoat or a mortgage repayment”.

Tanya's prediction of “the fall of the Weimar Republic revisited” might still apply to Melbourne. Yet even lucky Australia now has its home-grown fascist movement (“One Nation”) and a jittery election looming in a month. Our anxious autumn will be their suspenseful spring. Hold on tight.



The suburban dream of *Three Dollars* that sucked ‘Eddie’ in and then spat him out

Arts of darkness

Patrick Gale tracks a mystery out of Africa

AT ITS outset, Adam Thorpe's third novel could hardly seem further removed from the world of Upterton, his panarama of an English rural community. Now he plunges us into Bamukam, in the heart of equatorial Africa.

No matter: few novels ever dare to fuse emotional and economic life with the passionate intelligence of this one. Read it as a razored satire, a slice of history, a bitter warning – or simply as a reminder that “hard landings” happen to people and not to graphs. Tanya's prediction of “the fall of the Weimar Republic revisited” might still apply to Moscow more than to Melbourne. Yet even lucky Australia now has its home-grown fascist movement (“One Nation”) and a jittery election looming in a month. Our anxious autumn will be their suspenseful spring. Hold on tight.

Largely raised by black servants, Hugh has grown up with the mindset of a native African, attuned to the powers of the dead, of home-made fetishes, of spirits human and inhuman. He is haunted by overheard tales of white men “gone to seed” and by seemingly satanic images chanced upon in his parents' attic.

England seems a pallid contrast, but his uncle has pagan interests of his own. The dark woods and burial barrows of Upterton are not less alive and threatening than the jungle

rather her unexplained disappearance into the jungle, is broken to him.

There follows an extract from a journal kept by Hugh as a grand old man of the theatre as he returns reluctantly to Upterton following the death of his uncle's famously notorious second wife. Lumbered with executing her will, which inexplicably leaves the gloomy old house to charity, he begins to pry into the mysteries clouding his unhappy childhood and the possibility that his mother may have appeared to the villagers as a “ghost” following her presumed death. Only he stumbles on something hideous and, again, maddeningly, the narrative breaks off.

There follow a series of letters written by Hugh, in a state of mental turmoil (or is it recovery from another breakdown?) to his ever more mysterious mother. Then the mystery is deepened, and at last resolved by a series of long unread letters sent from her to his far-distant uncle and aunt in the weeks approaching his birth.

It's impossible to discuss the narrative further without betraying the twists and revelations on which many of the novel's pleasures rely. Suffice it to say that Thorpe has done it again. With its celebration of landscape, *Pieces of Light* will not disappoint those who devoured *Upterton*, but it should also attract aficionados of M.R. James who pine for an old-fashioned literary mystery.

Patrick Gale's latest book is his completion of Tom Wakefield's novel *The Scarlet Boy* (Serpent's Tail)



Pieces of Light
by Adam Thorpe

Jonathan Cape, £16.99, 488pp

that unnerves his mother.

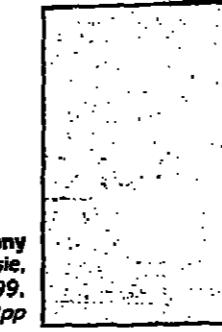
Thorpe's portrayal of Africa and tense marital relations seen through a child's transforming eye is extraordinary: sensuous, funny and frightening by turns, shot through with a icy sense of approaching menace. Alone, it might have proved the stuff of a novel of enduring power.

However, his model here is the work of Wilkie Collins (to which he makes passing references). Like *The Woman in White* and its fictional sisters, *Pieces of Light* is a mystery which reader as much as hero, is cast in the role of detective, forced to tear themselves away from one document – however attached they have become to its “author” – to read another and another until the terrible truth emerges.

What we have been reading is, it emerges, a childhood journal written by Hugh in his forties at the instigation of a psychiatrist helping him through a mental breakdown. It closes abruptly at the point where his mother's death, or

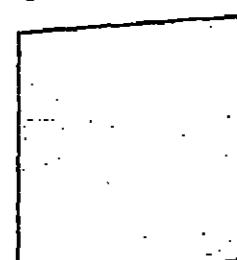
PAPERBACKS

BY EMMA HAGESTADT AND CHRISTOPHER HIRST

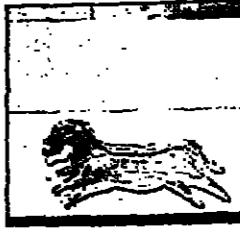
Anne
by Brian Hoey,
Pan, £5.99,
282ppKoolaid's
Alamedine
Abacus, £9.99,
245ppCourtesans and
Fishcakes
by James
Davidson,
Fontana, £9.99,
372ppMidnight Feast
by Martina
Evans,
Vintage, £6.99,
243ppAntony
by Alan Massie,
Sceptre, £6.99,
273pp

SPOKEN WORD

BY CHRISTINA HARDYMENT

Charlotte Gray
by Sebastian Faulks
Random House, 6hrs, £11.99

Sebastian Faulks's new novel continues his delicate sentimental journeying in France, this time against the background of the Second World War. Bottled up by a mysterious childhood experience, Charlotte feels both compassion and passion for the tortured pilot Peter Gregory. It leads her not only to emulate his torments in enemy territory but to risk her life by staying there to find him when he's reported missing. But the success of their reunion depends on the way Charlotte's experiences in France enable her to confront her father. Although the four cassettes are a generous abridgement, read sensitively by Samuel West, I felt it had to thin down a subtly plotted, cathartic novel into a mere thriller.

The Calendar
by David Ewing Duncan
HarperCollins, c 3hrs, £8.99

Forget the millennium. The year 2000 will be 1997 according to the actual date of Christ's birth, 2733 according to the old Roman calendar, 5760 for Jews, 1420 for Muslims, and 2554 for Buddhists. David Ewing Duncan's *The Calendar*, read by David Jacobs, begins by disorientating the listener. Why do we have 60 seconds in a minute and 24 hours in a day? Why seven, rather than ten days in a week? Then it explains the fascinating story, a mixture of mathematics, astrology, history and religion, of how civilisations experimented, borrowed and stole ideas on dividing time up into manageable morsels.

Moab Is My
Washpot
by Stephen Fry,
Arrow, £6.99,
434ppTruth: a history
and a guide for
the perplexed
by Felipe
Fernandez-
Arnesto,
Black Swan,
£6.99, 257ppThe Key of
the Tower
by Gilbert Adair,
Vintage, £6.99,
175pp

More enjoyable than his novels (which are pretty enjoyable), Stephen Fry's readable and wise autobiography covers his first 20 years - from Start-Rite-clad school boy to sophisticated habitué of Norwich's answer to cafe society: "Just John's Delicatique". Although he finally fulfills his parents' hopes of an Oxbridge place, Fry puts everyone around him, but particularly himself, through a bit of hell en route. The book includes some wonderful photographs of baby Fry and his lugubrious-looking Austro-Hungarian grandfather, and a farting organ joke that brings tears to the eyes. Good all-round advice on growing up "poofy" but happy.

Unwearied by his epic history of the Millennium, the Oxford historian-polymath takes on an even grander challenge. This deceptively small book allows that the long quest for truth does have a richly varied history and geography (so pipe down, you rigid Fundamentalists). Yet it eloquently shows that the search is worth the trouble, and that no human being can genuinely be a "relativist" (so back off, you woody Deconstructionists). Fernández-Arnesto steers a humane middle course between these two cardinal errors of our time. With a light touch and eclectic sources, he argues that "Every time we take notice of each other... we get a little closer to truth".

Cinéaste, obituarist and Francophile, Gilbert Adair has now turned his hand to thriller writing. When a French country road is blocked by a fallen tree, two drivers are stopped in their tracks: Guy Lantern, an English tourist, and Jean-Marc Charet, a French art dealer with a cross-channel ferry to catch. With no help at hand, the two men have no alternative but to scale the uprooted tree, swap cars, and continue on their separate journeys. Veering somewhat perilously between a Patricia Highsmith novel and an episode of *Some Mothers Do Have 'Em*, Adair's narrative follows the hapless Guy as he drives towards St Malo, off a cliff, and into the arms of another man's wife.

Though an appealingly whimsical topic for a scholarly disquisition, Grafton's monograph is dull beyond words. While devoting almost half his book to the use of the footnote by the tedious 19th-century historian Leopold von Ranke, nowhere does Grafton mention the wonderfully inventive use of this device in Nabokov's excellent *Pale Fire*. For all his excruciating pedantry, Grafton is inaccurate in his statement that "In Germany, unlike the US and England, the books in large university libraries are usually stored in order of acquisition." In fact, this is exactly how books are stored at both Oxford and Cambridge. On no account be tempted to acquire *The Footnote* yourself.

Irvine Welsh, like Robert Burns before him, has once more made Scots vernacular the literary lingo of choice. But, as the Orkney-based writer and editor Duncan McLean points out in his introduction to this lively anthology of contemporary Scottish writers, Welsh isn't the only practitioner of the Muirhouse tongue. From novelists Janice Galloway, James Kelman and Alan Warner to poets Alison Fieb and Alison Kermack, the selection includes as varied a collection of characters as you could hope to meet. But, be warned, McLean's own story about a telephone box filled with ribbon-tied thistles is as pretty as it gets.

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BESTSELLERS

The entry of Sebastian Faulks into the fiction list heralds an autumn market that looks set to be a battle of literary heavyweights and blockbusters. New novels by Julian Barnes, Ian McEwan, Ben Okri, Joanna Trollope, Justin Cartwright, Pat Barker, Robert Harris,

Martin Amis, Michael Dibdin, Ruth Rendell, Ben Elton, Tom Clancy and Dick Francis will all be jostling for our attention over the next month or two. With so much competition it is hardly surprising that some publishers are releasing books ahead of their

publication date: *Charlotte Gray* was officially published last Thursday but was in the shops a couple of weeks ago.

Compiled by Bookwatch from sales over seven days ending 30 August.
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ORIGINAL FICTION

| TITLE | AUTHOR/PUBLISHER | WEEKLY SALES | PRICE |
|--|-------------------------------|--------------|-------|
| 1 (1) <i>Fifth</i> | Irvine Welsh (Cape) | 11,583 | £9.99 |
| 2 (2) <i>Jemima J</i> | Jane Green (Penguin) | 9,617 | 5.99 |
| 3 (3) <i>Love Song</i> | Charlotte Bingham (Bantam) | 8,553 | 5.99 |
| 4 (-) <i>Rainbow Six</i> | Tom Clancy (M Joseph) | 7,858 | 16.99 |
| 5 (4) <i>Bag of Bones</i> | Stephen King (Hodder) | 6,646 | 16.99 |
| 6 (-) <i>Charlotte Gray</i> | Sebastian Faulks (Hutchinson) | 5,646 | 16.99 |
| 7 (8) <i>The Trials of Tiffany Trott</i> | Isabel Wolff (HarperCollins) | 4,062 | 6.99 |
| 8 (-) <i>Tara Road</i> | Maeve Binchy (Orion) | 2,645 | 16.99 |
| 9 (10) <i>Perfect Strangers</i> | Marian Keyes (Penguin) | 2,183 | 5.99 |
| 10 (7) <i>Hitched</i> | Zoe Barnes (Plattus) | 2,122 | 5.99 |

ORIGINAL NON-FICTION

| TITLE | AUTHOR/PUBLISHER | WEEKLY SALES | PRICE |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------|--------|
| 1 (2) <i>My 1998 World Cup Story</i> | Glenn Hoddle (Deutsch) | 6,125 | £17.99 |
| 2 (3) <i>The Little Book of Calm</i> | Paul Wilson (Penguin) | 5,632 | 1.99 |
| 3 (1) <i>Men are From Mars, Women are from Venus</i> | John Gray (Thornsons) | 4,985 | 9.99 |
| 4 (5) <i>The Guv'nor</i> | Lenny McLean (Blake) | 3,084 | 16.99 |
| 5 (4) <i>The Calendar</i> | David Ewing Duncan (Fourth Estate) | 2,773 | 12.99 |
| 6 (8) <i>Under the Tuscan Sun</i> | Frances Mayes (Bantam) | 2,404 | 5.99 |
| 7 (7) <i>The Little Book of Stress</i> | Rohan Candappa (Ebury) | 2,224 | 1.99 |
| 8 (-) <i>60 Ways to Feel Amazing</i> | Linda Field (Element) | 2,184 | 1.99 |
| 9 (10) <i>The Little Book of Dreams</i> | Joan Hanger (Penguin) | 1,864 | 1.99 |
| 10 (-) <i>Round Ireland With a Fridge</i> | Tony Hawks (Ebury) | 1,642 | 9.99 |

HOUSEHOLD

| TITLE | AUTHOR/PUBLISHER | WEEKLY SALES | PRICE |
|---|--------------------------------------|--------------|--------|
| 1 <i>The River Café Cookbook 2</i> | Rose Gray and Ruth Rogers (Ebury) | 599 | £15.00 |
| 2 <i>New Complete Baby and Toddler Meal Planner</i> | Annabel Karmel (Ebury) | 534 | 10.99 |
| 3 <i>Miller's Antiques Price Guide 1999</i> | Judith Miller (Miller's) | 518 | 22.50 |
| 4 <i>Meals in Minutes</i> | Ainsley Harriott (BBC) | 465 | 14.99 |
| 5 <i>Conception, Pregnancy and Birth</i> | Miriam Stoppard (Dorling Kindersley) | 444 | 16.99 |
| 6 <i>Complete Cookery Course</i> | Della Smith (BBC) | 442 | 9.99 |
| 7 <i>Handy Andy's Weekend Workbook</i> | Andy Kane and Chris Short (BBC) | 387 | 14.99 |
| 8 <i>Summer Collection</i> | Della Smith (BBC) | 331 | 14.99 |
| 9 <i>Complete Illustrated Guide to Feng Shui</i> | Lillian Too (Element) | 323 | 19.99 |
| 10 <i>Practical Feng Shui</i> | Simon Brown (Ward Lock) | 286 | 12.99 |

Sept 10 1998

Two young writers have given powerful voices to the 'East Indian' women of the Caribbean. Paula Burnett welcomes them

Harvesting the trees of knowledge

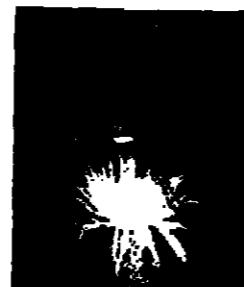
Take two narrators. One is a nurse in an old people's home, now, in an island resembling Trinidad, the other a child growing up a couple of decades ago in Guyana. Both are created by women of Asian ancestry, from the two Caribbean nations that are as much East Indian – in local parlance – as African. Onya Kempadoo (who was born in Britain, and now lives in Grenada) is Guyanese. Shani Mootoo is Trinidadian, although she was born in Ireland and now lives in Canada, where *Cereus Blooms at Night* has attracted warm praise.

These debut novels from promising writers share their distinctive Caribbeanness, but also an unconventional approach to sexual politics. For the nurse uncovering an old lady's story in Mootoo's book is a gay man, inhabiting a fictional world in which sexual identities are as mobile as globetrotters. Meanwhile, the girl who narrates Kempadoo's book prepares herself like an athlete-in-training for the heterosexual world, but by chiefly same-sexual play.

In both books, boundaries are there to be crossed. Nobody is one thing only. Nature is not a monomorality. That both titles refer to trees (*Buxton Spice* being a Guyanese mango) is significant, since both books query exclusive definitions of the natural or the normal.

Writing about the sexuality of children is not easy. A slight judgment of tone results either in alienation or prurience. Onya Kempadoo avoids both. Her trick is to narrate the sexual awakenings of a pre-pubescent Guyanese girl in her own voice, with all its local freshness and authoritative innocence, and in such a way that a national story emerges.

Buxton Spice is episodic, like a sequence of short stories, in which Lula matures from little girl to bra-



Cereus Blooms at Night
by Shani Mootoo
Granta, £14.99, 248pp



Buxton Spice
by Onya Kempadoo
Phoenix House, £12.99, 176pp

wearing teenager, alert to the neighbour's son, Milkey, described as "tall, dark and lanky. Black simy cat but white teeth smiling. He never knew how much I watched him". The decent people of Tamarind Grove, shocked when rape and murder rear their ugly heads in the neighbourhood, are quick to blame the politicians' lead.

Lula's voice is a brilliant achievement, precise, moving, poetic, and a reminder that children's interest in sex is as natural as that of animals.

These are rural children. They know the difference between a donkey's "lolo" and a pig's. Lula is intrigued by the grown-up world of sexuality, learning by play like the rest of us. She inhabits a Jungian world, assuming for herself and others a "man-self" and a "she-self" which can be staged at will by which different personalities of either gender, can have in different proportions.

This is a story we can all recognize, but it is also a carefully told oblique history of Guyana. If childhood innocence makes it in many ways a book of genesis, the serpent is named uncompromisingly as

the antithesis of the Shivering Northern Wetlands, or SNW.

This suggests a rather precious nod towards magic realism, but the political nous which should provide the hard hand in the magic realist glove remains somewhat limp.

For although the story Tyler tells in his quaint formal manner has a moving originality, it stays at times dangerously close to whimsy. Mootoo could do with a slice more of Kempadoo's sharpness.

A Gothic past hangs over the harmless old lady whose only sounds are imitations of small creatures, and whose frailty includes oddities such as erecting furniture into barricades. In fact, the strength of gentleness proves to be the paradox at the book's heart.

Tyler uncovers Mala's history as if lifting layers of gauze from a wound. Her pain is induced by patriarchal power, but that, in turn, is traced back to the colonial experience.

The father who sexually abused her was raised in a missionary family, losing his ancestral culture, but was ostracised when he took a shine to the white reverend's daughter. Hurt by this racism, he married on the rebound, only to find his disillusioned wife abandoned him for the said reverend's daughter.

This begins to sound like a none-too-good soap opera, and it gets worse. Yet in another way the plot, thickened though it is with sexual eroticism, stays curiously cool and eloquent.

Mootoo's book intrigues with its mysterious old lady, but Tyler's voice sounds dull after Lula's. It is Kempadoo who is taking the novelist Sam Selvon's torch and running with it. The story of East Indian women, in all its heterogeneity, is finally beginning to be told.

Shani Mootoo's book, which also records a loss of Eden, seems more formally sophisticated – with its retrospective retrieval of Mala Ramchandran's story by the gay nurse, Tyler, her carer – but it is not wholly convincing. The location is Paradise in the island of Lantana camera (camera-lantern),

Paula Burnett is editor of the Penguin Book of Caribbean Verse*



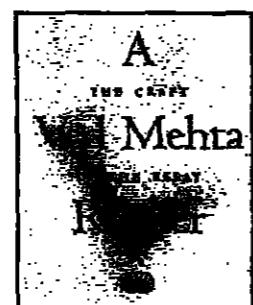
Onya Kempadoo: a new book of genesis from the tainted Caribbean Eden

From blindness to insight

Was Tina Brown right to sack this *New Yorker* star? Tony Gould thinks not

VENGEANCE IS a dish best savoured cold. Ved Mehta was one of the casualties of the Tina Brown takeover of the *New Yorker*. Four years later, Brown herself is a casualty in that magazine's downward spiral. All eight essays Mehta has selected for this book first appeared in the *New Yorker*, and seven have already been reprinted as chapters in his other books. Is Yale University Press justified in serving them up again, or was Ms Brown right in thinking we had had enough of Mr Mehta?

In length and subject, they vary enormously. The first and last essays focus on Oxford. Three others have Indian subjects; two deal with American experiences; and one investigates the life of Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Their author is cosmopolitan in outlook and has an impressive intellectual reach, embracing both contemporary philosophy and modern theology. If they have a "period flavour", as Mehta suggests, it is only in the sense that their concerns reflect the times in which they were written. What unites them is a writerly curiosity about human beings and what



A Ved Mehta Reader: the craft of the essay
by Ved Mehta
Vote UP, £12.50/£28, 416pp

makes them what they are.

Mehta is attracted by extraordinary or outstanding people, whether their accomplishments be intellectual, spiritual or literary. The most successful essay in the book is also one of the shortest: "The Train Had Just Arrived at Malgudi Station" is a richly ambivalent portrait

perfectly match its subject.

The first mention of the author's blindness, stemming from meningitis in early childhood, is on page 303. It comes as a shock (even to those who knew of it) after reading so many detailed descriptions of people's gestures and the way they look. (Though Mehta tells us something of how he researches and writes, he offers no clue as to how he observes.) Since the subject of this essay is a rich woman who comes to support his education through the American Foundation for the Blind, he has to refer to his affliction here. In describing the curious mutual dependency that develops between the eponymous benefactress, Mrs Clyde, and his doctor father, Mehta wrestles with conflicting emotions of gratitude, indignation and contempt, but manages to present a balanced portrait.

Yale has done us a service in making these remarkable essays available in so handy a form. As for Tina Brown, she did no one any favours in closing the doors of the *New Yorker* to one of its most distinguished contributors.

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Yale



Knebworth House in Hertfordshire: at a stroke, Edwin Lutyens introduced an air of calm by sweeping away acres of flower beds and replacing them with a sunken lawn surrounding a pond

Garden Picture Library

Subtle and sublime design

Oasis at Knebworth? No, not the pop group but the peaceful gardens of this stately home. Sarah Webbe visits a Lutyens creation

Imagine: in 1908 you inherit a large, opiate-inspired nightmare of a house with a garden requiring 30 gardeners and 36,000 bedding plants. Fortunately your sister marries a chap who seems to have some useful ideas. This struggling architect would probably love to get his hands on your house and make his name by rebuilding it, but instead you let him loose on the garden which he redesigns for free for the rest of his life. His name is Edwin Lutyens. The house is Knebworth in Hertfordshire.

At a stroke Lutyens introduced calm to the garden by sweeping away the acres of parterre behind the house and replacing the beds with a sunken lawn planted with a square of pleached limes surrounding a pond. The simplicity leaves one breathless, but the effect is perfectly still and cool. The original 1911 lines survive, beautifully shaped by brutal annual pruning and, although the lawn could be introduced to a roller, the thick turf is luxurious underfoot.

Roses have had a bad year thanks to the wet spring rust and rampant greenfly, yet the rose-garden still delights - a symphony of pink and white spreading out into ebullient herbaceous borders of blue and purple. The colours work well in the 1911 scheme - riotous from a distance yet curiously peaceful from within.

This garden is well endowed with enabling armchair gardeners like myself to appreciate it on several levels, including the meticolously simple ponds (Lutyens) and wonderfully decaying Gothic stone buckets (not Lutyens but deliciously planted up).

Yews are a terrific structural element to play with and our as-yet-unknown architect planted lots of them. Not prissy little birds or twidly balls on sticks - our man was able to see his grow big enough to sculpt into immense hedges of huge primeval forms. "Oh yeah?" they seem to say to the eye-popping house opposite. They are not diminished by niches cut into one side to accommodate some droopy Victorian classical goddesses, whom

somebody must have loved. High yew hedges were also key to the garden equivalent of an air-lock, a small, plain, green garden that leads by oblique openings into my favourite place at Knebworth. Not ones for loopy names here, they call it the Yellow Garden, and it is.

Protected by those massive hedges, a tranquil pool bubbles gently. The yellow and gold colour scheme is warm and restful, the balance of the design pleasing. The

Japanese go to inordinate lengths of artifice and symbolism to get visitors to slow down and find peace in their gardens. Lutyens did it effortlessly.

There is a fair bit to forgive, though, as the garden generally was in need of a good haircut when I visited. Staff shortage at this time of year is a disaster in tidiness terms, but press on because this place is packed with features of such strength that they mostly overcome the pressing need for dead-heading.

The blithely named Brick Garden actually justifies a far more frivolous moniker to catch the charm of this outbreak of typical Arts & Crafts brick paths skirting small beds and miniature lawns. I thought the actual paths were more authentically distressed than Lutyens meant, but the effect is delightful. Apart from the pergola. Oh, I am sure he made one there; I just do not believe it looked like the present incumbent. So roll on the new planting which will

smother it rapidly in a conflagration of clematis, jasmine, wisteria and buddleia, reducing the sheep in the park beyond to mere sound effects. What would he have made of the maze, always a commercial feature nowadays (unless you are rich enough not to need the public in your garden) and hideously time-consuming to maintain? The surrounding planting of ground-cover roses and decent-sized standard honeysuckles is pretty, which rather softens the point of a maze as a dark, scary place where children get lost and adults get frisky. It is more understandable than Mahus walls which is really a short trot from nowhere in particular into nowhere else. Apparently its layout is a work in progress - part of the continuing renovation and reinvention of the place.

It was probably Lutyens who asked his friend Gertrude Jekyll to scribble a design for the herb garden. It was not made, though, until 1985 when the plan surfaced in America and, Lo! another much trumpeted feature was born. Personally, if I had a bit of real Saint Gertrude, I would make a point of keeping it a bit tidier, especially as it relies on a severely mathematical design (a quincunx - five circular stone beds set in a diamond shape) and loses impact when the herbs have shot gloriously all over it.

There's the rub. This is a large and increasingly labour-intensive garden being bravely revived out of a private purse. To keep it petal perfect is an enormous task and, frankly, it does not matter. I enjoyed the whole place, including the clean loos, pleasant staff and the fact that the view of Stevenson is on the other side of the house. Oh, and did someone mention a pop concert?

Knebworth House, Knebworth, near Stevenage, Hertfordshire, is just off junction 7 of the M1. During September the garden is open at weekends. A combined ticket for the house and grounds is £5; £4 for garden and park only. Separate admission to the adventure playground in the park. For further information and special events call 01438 812 661.

CUTTINGS: NEWS FROM THE GARDENER'S WORLD

THEIR ARE dozens of schools for keen gardeners, usually in agreeable surroundings. One of the longest established is the English Gardening School, based at the Chelsea Physic Garden in London. It is best known for its year-long professional garden-design courses, but also runs shorter

courses for amateurs. In the next six months, courses will cover topics such as garden photography, botanical illustration and spring bulbs. Many of the lecturers are experts such as Anna Pavord (who returns to *The Independent* in November). She will be conducting two one-day

courses in spring on the "New Kitchen Garden". The £77.55 cost includes VAT and a light lunch. Write to: The English Gardening School, The Chelsea Physic Garden, 66 Royal Hospital Road, London SW3 4HS (0171-352 4347); e-mail: egss@dircon.co.uk

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Why you should let sleeping flowers lie

They are not dead, just dormant: bulbs need to be treated with care.
In the annual rush to plant for spring, Ursula Buchan offers a guide

Autumn bulb-planting is one of those annual rituals, like pruning clematis or picking the apple crop, which measures out the gardening year. Its place in my horticultural calendar is assured, both because no garden can ever be said to have too many spring-flowering bulbs and because their method of growth, and the effects they create, seem almost magical.

Every year I plant several hundred bulbs (also corms, tubers and rhizomes, to be strictly accurate) in grass, in borders and in pots, and I will continue to do so until the Crack of Doom, even though their capacity to perpetuate themselves makes them some of the most enduring plants in the garden.

However, the moment for the inevitable bulb-planting binge can find me regrettably unprepared. Instead of passing an un hurried evening in midsummer filling in an order to a specialist mail-order firm, which is what I like best, I spend an early September afternoon scouting around garden centres.

In normal circumstances, no one could accuse me of being a touchy-feely kind of girl, but I rather let myself down when I go buying spring-flowering bulbs. Regardless of the strange looks I attract, I touch and feel like anything, determined not to waste money on bulbs which rot or shrivel after planting.

After all, flowering bulbs are living things. At the time of sale they are not dead, only sleeping. Almost without exception, they have a period in the year when they lie dormant. Their shoots die down after flowering and seedling, and their roots shrivel, but within, next year's flowering shoot and leaves are forming. If you cut open a daffodil bulb you can see the embryonic leaves tightly folded, ready to unfurl and

elongate once conditions are right for growth.

While they are in this dormant state, bulbs are surprisingly vulnerable. High temperatures will shrivel them up, while high humidity will leave them open to rot. Whenever you buy them, it makes sense to take careful account of how cool and dry the atmosphere is, and how well-protected the bulbs are from direct sunlight. If I am hot and sweaty, I am sure they will be too.

Some bulbs are more vulnerable than others. For example, anemones are old toughies whereas fritillaries are naturally soft and fleshy, so I buy the latter only if they are stored loose and separately in sawdust, rather than jumbled together in plastic bags. The same goes for summer-flowering lilies bought in the spring.

Before I part with my money for any bulb, I test its solidity by

pressing a finger against the base-plate, from which can usually be seen one or two old shrivelled roots, and also squeeze the neck of the bulb, as one might do a cooking onion in the supermarket. I avoid any that show signs of mould, bruising, pest damage or bad cracking, and buy those with tunicas (such as tulips and bulbous irises) only if they are intact.

As for those bulbs such as winter aconites and snowdrops which re-establish themselves quickest if they are dug up "in the green" (just after flowering), I think it better to do swaps with a kind friend, or buy them in pots in the spring, rather than acquire them dry now and risk losing the flower in the first spring.

All my care in choosing is so much wasted time, however, if I leave them lying about at home before planting. The sooner bulbs go in the

ground once acquired, the better. Time presses in September. Now that most of us have had some rain (and northern gardens have had rather more than is ideal) and, in theory at least, the soil is still warm from summer sun, it is best to get bulbs underground as soon as possible so that roots will grow quickly and anchor before the winter.

The exceptions to this are tulips which, because their growing shoots can easily be damaged by winter frosts, are usually planted in November. No spring-flowering bulb likes a soil that becomes waterlogged, so heavy clay soils should be lightened with plenty of grit. If mature or compost is dug in (and the larger bulbs such as daffodils and fritillaries appreciate it), it should lie below the level of the bulbs. For most smaller bulbs, a handful of general fertiliser per square yard is sufficient.

The important consideration (and it is not as barry as it sounds) is to ensure that the bulb is planted the right way up, or it will either fail or waste precious time turning itself round. Bulbs such as daffodils obviously have a growing point and a basal root plate, but the top and bottom of some corms and tubers, such as cyclamen, are harder to divine. Look for any residual roots or incipient buds.

The basic rule of thumb for achieving the right planting depth is to have the top of the bulb twice its height below the surface. Common sense dictates that very large bulbs must be protected from drying out and need to be anchored deep in the soil, but it is not so vital for small bulbs, such as snowdrops, which often work their way to the surface when overcrowded, and still manage to flower. Crocuses even have the capacity to pull themselves up or down, by means of "contractile" roots, to the level they prefer.

As I said, magical.

DIG MAIN-CROP potatoes to stop damage from slugs. These burrow into the tubers and prevent them from starting well. Choose a dry day and leave the potatoes on the surface for a while so that the soil shakes off easily.

This is a good time to plant an evergreen hedge, such as yew – provided your soil is reasonably moist, or you can water it in well. Put up a protective screen, perhaps in polypropylene, to shield young plants through autumn and winter until the roots are well established.

There is plenty to harvest in the kitchen garden – blackberries, raspberries, tomatoes, sweet peppers and pumpkins as well as early varieties of apples and pears.

WEEKEND WORK



URSULA BUCHAN

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Meysey Hampton, near Cirencester: 'everything looks like the epitome of an English village ... I felt that the village should not only win its class but also go forward as our nominee in the national competition' Tom Pilston

The village with the mostest

Once again the best-kept village competition is upon us, and once again I have had the invidious task of judging the finalists in Gloucestershire. On a higher level the contest is nationwide, and one outstanding entrant from each county goes forward to compete for the title of Village of the Year; but I suspect that the problems which our own Bledisloe Cup entries bring to light are common throughout the land.

The school, the shop and the pub close down; local jobs are scarce or non-existent; bus services are withdrawn; commuter traffic roars along narrow lanes; and ugly new houses are built - all developments which threaten traditional rural life.

This year, as always, villages were divided into three categories: small (less than 300 inhabitants), medium (300-1,000) and large (1,000-3,000). In two preliminary rounds other volunteer judges did the donkey work of whittling our 46 entrants down to two in each category. As before, the instructions were to ignore natural assets such as fine scenery or buildings, and look instead for evidence of community effort.

The finalists receive advance warning of the period in which judging will take place. This enables them to mow the grass twice a day, if they wish, and hold continual purges of litter; but it also means that

they can post vigilantes to waylay the judge and bend his ear. To avoid such confrontations, I make my inspections on a mountain bike, which not only affords a degree of camouflage, but also enables me to get around much faster than on foot.

Even with these advantages, I found this year's task hard going. How am I to compare, and choose between, two utterly different places? In the Small category, for instance, the finalists were Awre, a rustic hamlet between the river Severn and the Forest of Dean, and Cherington, a rather glossy settlement near Tewkesbury.

Awre is gloriously agricultural: cattle graze in lush water-meadows, the lanes are spattered with dung, and in the churchyard an awe-inspiring, 1,000-year-old yew stands guard over the weathered tomb-

stones of sailors who drowned in the river long ago. My instinctive liking for the place was increased when, finding I had no money on me, I asked the landlord of the Red Hart if I could pay for a pint of beer with a credit card, and his immediate response was "Certainly!"

And yet I had to admit that the village could have been tidier. There were tufts of flowers beside the war memorial, and a small conservation area of trees and shrubs had been established. But hedges and verges were distinctly hirsute, and several private gardens were perfunctory. The rules do say "best-kept village".

Cherington is utterly different: neat as a pin, swept, mown, clipped, immaculate, with a cricket field like a bowling-green and dry-stone walls of a precision not easily imagined. Obviously, people live here, but what

COUNTRY MATTERS



DUFF HART-DAVIS

do they? There is something almost artificial about the perfection. It is clearly not the fault of the present inhabitants that pub, school and shop have all gone under and been converted into private dwellings:

nevertheless, the absence of the activities which those establishments once fostered gives the village the air of a museum exhibit.

Awre is more natural, Cherington neater. But best-kept? Regrettably that anyone had to lose, I made Cherington the winner.

The same disparity of character

was evident in the Large category. Painswick, styling itself "Queen of the Cotswolds", has bags of class: its elegantly faced stone houses cluster on a hillside with spectacular views. Its rival, Upton St Leonards, is far less favoured: terrain flat, buildings largely nondescript, houses scattered, the whole bounded on one side by the M5.

These disadvantages predisposed me in Upton's favour - and I found evidence of much community effort the grounds of the new

school had been finely landscaped, footpaths had been opened up, and the sports field was in admirable order, with cheerful new equipment in the playground. Yet similar work had gone on in Painswick also, and after much agonising I felt obliged to find in favour of the more gaudy contendor.

By chance the two middle-weight finalists, Down Ampney and Meysey Hampton, are neighbours. Just as less than two miles of farmland separate them, so there was practically nothing between them in the community effort stakes.

In Down Ampney, when the local store closed down, a group of volunteers struck back by opening a shop of their own in a Portakabin. Another admirable initiative is the village's Design Statement, which aims at keeping any new houses

that are built in tune with existing architectural styles.

The only blot was the fact that several householders appear to practise a kind of horticultural laissez-faire, so that the many glorious gardens are let down by patches of jungle in between.

No such blemishes mar Meysey Hampton, whose appearance struck me as extraordinarily harmonious. Maintenance of sports field, pond, verges, hedges and private gardens is exemplary; yet the place does not seem over-manicured.

On the contrary, everything looks the epitome of an English village, and the Mason's Arms, standing above the triangular green, smothered with hanging flower baskets, is surely the epitome of the English country pub.

I felt that the village should not only win its class, but also go forward as our nominee in the national competition.

At every stop I did my best to be fair and constructive, to praise rather than criticise. Now that my decisions are made and my report written, I only hope I have not given offence. I shall know the worst next Saturday, when, in the company of executives of the CPRE and Calor Gas, who sponsor the competition, I tour the winners to present plaques.

If our whole party is pelted with eggs or rotten tomatoes, I know whose fault it will be.



A wood wasp

THIS IS proving a bumper year for wasps - not because of the weather, which has been very mixed, but because the population fluctuates in seven-year cycles, and we are now near the peak of the latest. During the summer, wasps convert wood into a kind of paper to build their nests: made from rotten wood or

NATURE NOTE

weathered surfaces of shed doors or fence-posts. These nests can reach up to six feet across, and house up to 3,000 workers.

Only female wasps can sting, but, unlike bees, they have unbarbed stings and can make repeated thrusts. Wasps' main food consists of insects. At about this time of year they become

lazy and favour sweet things such as rotting apples.

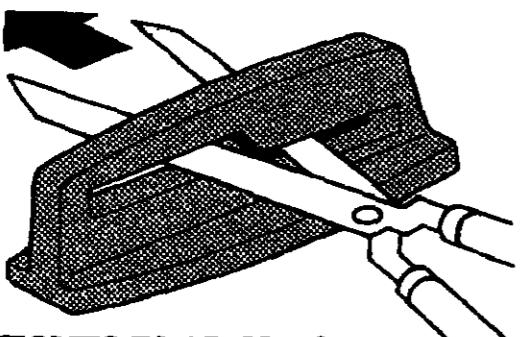
Almost the entire colony dies out in late autumn. Only a minute proportion of the queens - fewer than one per cent - gets through the winter, which they survive by hibernating under the bark of trees, in leaf-litter or curtains.

DUFF HART-DAVIS



A wasp's nest

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Spineless wonders also matter

Spare a thought for the invertebrates, many of which face extinction. By Daniel Butler

AT LEAST 1,000 British invertebrates are on the verge of extinction or critically endangered. And who cares? Not the great British public, it seems.

"A warbler cricket or a green bush cricket just don't have the same appeal as an otter," says Dr Lyster, director general of the Wildlife Trust. "Companies fall over themselves to sponsor an otter - not just because they are rare, but because they are popular. Today the otter is probably Britain's best loved animal, but at the turn of the century it was regarded as vermin. Attitudes can change rapidly and what is our insignificant creepy-crawly could well be our children's conservation totem."

The problem is familiar to conservationists around Britain. "The medicinal leech is now probably down by about 12 sites," says Vin Fleming, species group manager at Scottish Natural Heritage. "It's an intrinsically repulsive creature, but it has had a long association with man and its endangered state is probably mainly due to decimation by collectors for the medical trade." In the end it has won corporate sponsorship from the pharmaceutical giant, Glaxo Wellcome, which is donating £54,000 over three years to identify the handful of remaining leech sites and to help safeguard them for the future.



In danger but not cute: the great green bush cricket Philip Meech

Likewise, at least the dietary habits of the dung beetle make it stand out from the crowd. "When Lord Montagu of Beaulieu announced that he was sponsoring this, it was treated as a joke," says Dr Lyster. "The same goes for the depressed river mussel, but at least they got noticed."

In contrast the narrow-headed ant (*Formica execta*) has trouble attracting attention. "To put it mildly, anyone who gets sponsorship for a narrow-

headed ant deserves a huge pat on the back," says Dr Lyster. "In fact, if any of our fund-raisers managed it they'd get instant promotion."

The picture is repeated throughout the list of endangered species requiring particular attention on the Scottish Natural Heritage action plan. Although it is far from comprehensive, a brief glance shows that it is dominated by relative unknowns. There are only two mammals (the red squirrel and the beaver) and three birds (the sea eagle, red kite and corncrake) among the 28 species.

Of course some would question why we would want to bother saving creatures, many of which are so rare and nondescript that we are not even sure whether they have already vanished. Mr Fleming maintains that it is important to try.

"Everything has a role in the eco-system, even if we may not fully understand this," he says. "And on a more utilitarian note, people can get an enormous amount of pleasure studying and protecting some of our rarest species."

Fortunately, the public seems slowly to be recognising this. Dr Lyster believes the picture is slowly improving as the public becomes more aware of the importance of bio-diversity. "Wildlife Trust members are proud of the rarer species found on their local reserves and the public at large is starting to demand that we look after our own bio-diversity," he says. "But when it comes to finding corporate sponsors for creepy-crawlies the picture is still pretty bleak." So while the water companies are sponsoring oysters to the tune of £750,000, the warbler, the great green bush cricket and mole crickets have little such luck.



This road once led to Rome

In Norfolk, it is still possible to drive along an ancient route staggeringly rich in Roman remains. By Guy de la Bédoyère



The Gariannonum Roman fort at Burgh Castle on the Norfolk Broads is one of the many surviving Roman treasures to be found in East Anglia

Robert Harding Picture Library

The A140 is a road lined by ghosts. Today it is a trunk route between Norwich and Ipswich. Two thousand years ago it was the road between the Roman town of Venta Icenorum and Camulodunum or as it's better known today, Colchester. Fifty-five years ago it was the road north from the Eighth Air Force base at Thorpe Abbotts to the fleshiots of Norwich.

Like most Roman regional capitals, Venta was an artificial foundation, designed to exploit tribal identities. The name means "market-place of the Iceni". The towns were endowed with Roman public buildings, such as a forum; the plan was that the natives would flock to the town to buy Roman goodies and get sucked into Roman life.

This was normally successful, but not in Norfolk, which was a backwater in Roman times. When the town was walled in the 200s AD those walls enclosed a smaller area than the original foundation. Venta was shrinking. Perhaps memories of Boudicca's revolt, when she burst out of Norfolk at the head of the Iceni

to fight the Romans in the year 60, kept Roman traders away.

When the Saxons moved into the area in the fifth century, they settled where Norwich is now. Venta crumbled, and returned to nature. The ruins lie close to the village of Caistor St Edmund, about a mile and a half east of the A140 just south of Norwich. The turning is off the roundabout where the A140 meets Norwich's ring road, the A47.

Go south through the village of Caistor; pass the church and just beyond you'll see a small parking area. From here a footpath leads around the ruined walls of Roman Venta. On the west side a crumbling bastion, made of ragstone and tile, still stands proud of the tattered earthworks that mark the walls. It's hard to believe that this was once a thriving town with houses, government buildings and public baths.

One of the mysteries of Roman Britain is why this relatively poor area - villas, for instance, are few and far between - has yielded some of the greatest treasures not just of Britain but of the whole Roman world. It was at Hoxne (pronounced

"Hoxen"), near Diss, that Eric Lawes found a fabulous late Roman treasure in 1992. The carefully buried hoard (dating to the year 408 or later - the date of the last coin found) included not only a magnificent series of silver spoons, jewellery, and silver pepperpots, but also nearly 15,000 gold and silver coins

Why was this flabbergasting quantity of wealth buried near the old Roman road? In those days, five gold coins would pay a soldier for a year. At the time Roman Britain was coming to an end. With insurrections crumbling, rebels revolting and barbarians battering the shore defences, there was good reason to bury valuables. Already for more than a century East Anglia had been defended by a series of forts around the coast. Burgh Castle, not far away near Great Yarmouth, is one of the best preserved.

Some of the Hoxne spoons carry the name of Aurelius Ursicinus, but no one knows who he was. Perhaps he and his family had travelled across Britain from their home and stashed their savings in what was then a remote place. Perhaps the

treasure had already been requisitioned by officials and was to be used to pay off barbarians.

We'll never know. There's nothing to see here now, but the treasure is all on display in the new Roman-British gallery at the British Museum in London along with the two other great Roman treasures of East Anglia: Thetford and Mildenhall.

Half a century ago this part of England became a huge aircraft carrier, confronting another threat from across the North Sea. East Anglia was the main concentration of bases for the American Eighth Air Force, active here between 1942 and 1945.

Thorpe Abbotts, close to Dickleburgh on the A140 and a stone's throw from Hoxne, was home to the 100th Bombardment Group, known as the Bloody Hundredth. On their 306

missions the men of this unit suffered some of the heaviest losses of the whole Eighth Air Force. They were crowded along Norwich's cobbled streets, bewildered by the sheer antiquity of one of Britain's finest medieval cities, appalled by the warm beer, and captivated by the women who were mesmerised by

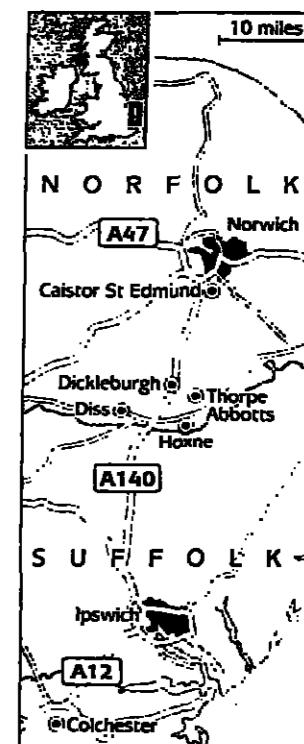
and tools, recovered engines from crashed bombers, uniforms, models and mementoes. The airfield is mostly gone now, but the huge expanse of runways and taxi-ways have left their mark in the vast cleared areas between the trees.

Stand on the top of the control tower and look out across the weed-strewn taxi-way and beyond to the piles of hay that sit in the middle of the runway. This was where the base officers craned their necks to scan the sky and count the Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress bombers as they returned. The losses were sometimes colossal. On 17 August 1943 the Bloody Hundredth participated in one of the most ambitious air raids of the war to date, when they bombed Regensburg. Of the 21 aircraft that left from here that day nine were lost.

To relax, the crews would leap into trucks and hurtle to Norwich up the A140 for a few days' leave. Here they crowded along Norwich's cobbled streets, bewildered by the sheer antiquity of one of Britain's finest medieval cities, appalled by the warm beer, and captivated by the women who were mesmerised by

American ways. The Romans and the Eighth Air Force have become part of a national myth. But the A140 still serves as it has always done, lined by the ghosts of Britain's wars, ancient and modern.

The Hoxne treasure is on permanent exhibition in London at the British Museum (0171-636 1555). Nearest Tube: Russell Square. Open daily (Sundays afternoons only). Free. An excellent booklet by Roger Bland and Catherine Johns (£4.95) covers the story of the find and has first-class illustrations. The Castle Museum in Norwich has finds from Caistor (01603 223624). Roman Caistor St Edmund is open at any reasonable time (OS Ref. TG 230035, sheet 134). So is the fort of Burgh Castle (OS Ref. TG 475046, sheet 134), three miles west of Great Yarmouth. The 100th Bomb Group museum (01379 749708) at Thorpe Abbotts is signposted from Dickleburgh on the A140. Open all year at the weekend (10am-5pm, 4.30pm between October and April, and on Wednesdays from May to September (10am-5pm). Free.



Why you paid £276 for that £58 air fare

It's simple. Inexorable market forces lead to the 'value' of an aeroplane seat being as volatile as that of a ripe tomato. By Simon Calder



Competition is fierce on the London to Edinburgh route

HOW LOW can they go? This week Ryanair raised the Anglo-Scottish air stakes by cutting its lowest Stansted to Prestwick fare to just £16.99 one way. The move is partly aimed at taking the wind out of Go's sails. On Tuesday, the new British Airways subsidiary starts flying from Edinburgh to Stansted, launching its first domestic route for a low-cost fare of £70 return.

It is between the English and Scottish capitals that competition is likely to be stiffer. For the first time, Go has gone head-to-head against another airline: KLM UK already flies the route, and has announced that it will undercut the British Airways offshoot by offering a fare of £88 return on its 10 daily flights.

Fifteen years ago BA had the Edinburgh-London route to itself, flying when it felt like it, offering minimal in-flight service and charging more or less what it liked. Now travellers can only benefit from competition from British Midland on flights

to and from Heathrow, KLM UK to Stansted and London City, and easyJet to Luton - not forgetting, of course, Great North Eastern Railways, which gets you from London to Edinburgh in less than four hours.

But why do the fares vary so much? For travelling the 350 miles between London Heathrow and Scotland's largest cities, A could pay £58 return while B stamps up £276 - and that's for seats on the same British Midland flight.

There are a couple of answers. The argument the airlines prefer to use is that A and B are buying different products. Traveller A must book a fortnight in advance, and stay over a Saturday night. The fare is restricted to off-peak flights, and does not allow for a change of either airline or flight.

Passenger B can travel on any flight and may return after an hour or a year, earning frequent flyer points in the process; he or she is allowed to switch from British

Midland to British Airways with impunity, and can get a full refund.

The second, more revealing answer is the black art that the airlines apply to the highly perishable commodity that is an aircraft seat: yield management. It means squeezing the maximum revenue from every passenger on the plane, while trying to ensure no seat is left empty. The way they manage to do this is to segment the market and charge whatever each part of it will bear.

Imagine a market trader with a box of tomatoes. He or she knows that a certain proportion will be sold at full price to people who simply must have a good, ripe fruit for tonight's dinner. These customers equate to the business travellers. The price will be quietly reduced to entice buyers who are quite happy buying tinned tomatoes from the supermarket, but will buy them fresh if the price is right. The parallel is passengers who might otherwise travel by train.

Yet the trader still has some produce left. To off-load this before the rot sets in, he or she must cut the price still further to attract customers who hadn't been planning to buy tomatoes at all today, but will do so if they're really cheap: the "discretionary travellers". The trader keeps a few back because experience shows that there will always be a couple of last-minute panic buyers who will pay almost any price for the product they need. Result: a happy trader, who has maximised earnings.

The theory works just fine, until people start talking to each other and find that some have paid five times more than others. But the business traveller who becomes apoplectic at the thought of subsidising the back-pecker in the seat next to him should realise that peaceful coexistence ought to prevail; each passenger is helping the other by keeping fares lower or services more frequent than they might otherwise be.

The existing traders were not overjoyed when Stelios Haji-Ioannou launched up three years ago, launching easyjet from Luton to Edinburgh and Glasgow. Its low one-way fares, plus the innovation of electronic ticketing, made Luton suddenly fashionable once more. The airline's lead-in fare of £58 return from Luton to each of Scotland's four leading airports - Aberdeen and Inverness as well as Edinburgh and Glasgow - has set the benchmark for budget cross-border air travel.

Meanwhile, don't neglect the theory works just fine, until people start talking to each other and find that some have paid five times more than others. But the business traveller who becomes apoplectic at the thought of subsidising the back-pecker in the seat next to him should realise that peaceful coexistence ought to prevail; each passenger is helping the other by keeping fares lower or services more frequent than they might otherwise be.

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When Go's 900 seats a day are added to the market, there is a risk

that some of the competition could be squeezed out.

But in the short term, all the competitors say that they're determined to compete - and they have the resources to back that up. Intriguingly, the most significant loser of Go's entry to the market could be its parent, British Airways.

Finally, recognise that domestic flights will never ever win the battle for the best-value air fare. For the next three months, you can fly from London via Dubai, Colombo and Singapore to Melbourne for less than £500 on award-winning Emirates. This works out at around 2p a mile, compared with a minimum of 12p a mile for the 700-mile round trip between Edinburgh and London.

Contact numbers: British Airways 0345 222111; British Midland 0345 554554; easyjet 0890 292929; GNER 0345 225225; Go 0845 50 54321; KLM UK 0890 074074; Ryanair 0541 569569; Virgin Trains 0345 222333.

An all-consuming time in Normandy



Normandy, where fairs and celebrations are held in honour of food

Barrie Smith

Who would become 'le plus gros mangeur de Livarot'? In the land of cheese and cider, Hugh O'Shaughnessy joins an eating contest

Have you put your name down for the eating competition, monsieur?" said the kindly looking girl at Encoignard's charcuterie as I bought my slice of *pâté de foie*. Did I really, I thought to myself, look like a fat old man who could enter an eating competition with any chance of success? Horrified, I realised that perhaps I did.

I needn't have worried at the implications of the *charcutière*'s inquiry. Two days later, Philippe won what turned out to be a test of eating rather than capacity. He is a sweltering man in his thirties with a thin face and the figure of a winner of the Tour de France.

"You get the little cheese down first, then take a swig of cider. A good fat belch then sets you up for getting the big one down." Flushed with the applause of an appreciative crowd in the Place Pasteur, Philippe gave tips to potential challengers as he clutched his trophy. It was one of those anonymous garish things that you can buy in sports shops for a few francs but that day it was rescued from anonymity by a little typed note glued to the base which read: "Le plus gros mangeur de Livarot, 1998".

In a little under four minutes, seated on a platform with six others, each looking like a figure out of one of the more troubling pictures of Vincent Van Gogh, Philippe had just downed 750 grammes of Livarot cheese and a litre of cider and had claimed the prize in the carrier bag - some more cheese and a couple of bottles of cider.

Also triumphant, and with a trophy and carrier bag was Madame Buchet - Annie to her friends - a tall stylish woman d'un certain âge wearing an attractive T-shirt featuring small pink pigs having sexual congress in various positions more common to the human than to the animal world. She had a walkover since she alone of the Livarotaises had presented herself on the platform. But she was applauded none the less. "You know," said Madame Renée in the tourist office slyly, "ladies don't like to run the risk of putting on weight."

Under the indulgent gaze of two *gendarmes*, Monsieur Bauny, the town policeman, armed with a whistle and an enormous pot belly, then led los *marchais* from a neighbouring town into the square where they serenaded the public tirelessly but with great verve. Wearing Mexican hats, they produced something of a tropical rhythm in the little Norman town that cloudy summer afternoon.

Behind the platform the children squealed with delight on the spaceships and helicopters of the little merry-go-round while people lined up to give 10 franc pieces to happy, foxy-looking stallholders for the privilege of attempting impossible tasks with skittles and plastic ducks.

The day before had been the kids' day on the platform.

The under-12s had been split into teams of two. The first, protected with a black plastic rubber sack, sat at table in front of six pots of yoghurt, with instructions to look straight in front. The second stood behind, blindfold and charged with putting the yoghurt in, or at least near, the partner's mouth.

The resultant mess was monumental, the fun enormous and another generation was prepared for a gastronomic future.

At half past five the following afternoon, the traders in cheese and wine and sausages,

black pudding, cider and *gateau basque* at the scores of stalls throughout the town were beginning to count their earnings. Perhaps even the used car salesmen who cheekily put some of his stock on the pavement at the top of the town made a sale or two. In the tent that waiters began final preparations for the communal feast which would follow and close Livarot's eleventh annual cheese festival.

Livarot lives on cheese and cider. The town, tucked into a green valley, is within walking distance of the tiny village of Camembert where two centuries ago Marie Harel rose to fame on the basis of a recipe supposedly confided to her during the French Revolution by a priest.

There is a big factory in Livarot turning out all sorts of soft cheeses, while at the other end of town, the Ecusson plant produces wine by the lakelet.

The eleventh annual cheese fair in the small town was a candle of thanks to the gods of food and drink.

This description is not written simply to attract readers to Livarot. The little town, three-quarters of an hour's drive south-east of Caen, is not a wonderfully beautiful or charming place. But it is characteristic of scores of towns in Normandy and thousands in France as a whole. The fairs and celebrations they stage reveal something of French people's deep love and enjoyment of food. It is a sentiment that is not to be found in Britain, not even in today's New Labour sun-dried tomato country. There's nothing quite like eating in Livarot.

FACT FILE

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drink in the green valleys of the Pays d'Auge, the local tourist authorities have devised a Route du Cidre and a Route du Fromage. For more details of the all-consuming traits contact the tourist office at Lisieux (11 rue d'Alençon, tel 03 33 23 01 08 41). More information: French Travel Centre, 178 Piccadilly, London W1V 0AL (0891 244123, a premium-rate number) or www.franceguide.com

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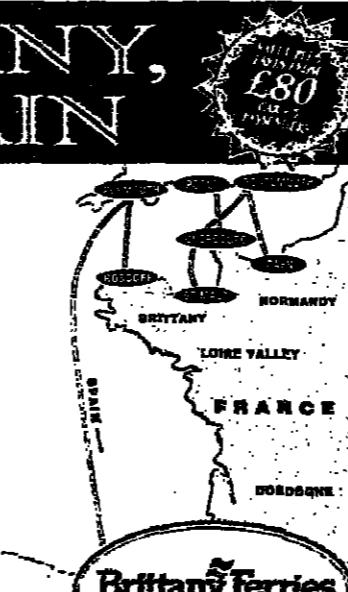
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In many of his paintings, such as 'Entrance to the Public Garden at Arles', above, Van Gogh celebrated the town in which he lived

Bridgeman Art Library

The views of Vincent

In Arles it is still (just) possible to see the landscape painted by Van Gogh. By Richard Warren

Standing on the banks of the river Rhône, at the very spot where Vincent Van Gogh painted the *Starry Night*, Picasso is said to have looked to the sky and said "that is one thing nobody can destroy". He was alluding to the fact that the bridge and so much of the landscape depicted in the painting had changed.

Van Gogh's home, the "Yellow House", no longer stands. It was reduced to rubble by American bombers attempting to destroy the bridge during World War Two. But they are not the only ones to blame for wrecking much of Van Gogh's presence in Arles, the southern French town where he created some of his most famous paintings.

Until recently, the people of this former Roman capital of France had little enthusiasm for celebrating the life and work of a man they once considered a dangerous lunatic - so much so that they had even petitioned the mayor to remove him from the town. Indeed, Jeanne Calment, who died in August 1997 aged 122, remembered Van Gogh from her childhood, and labelled him "a vulgar young man". Apparently, he

made comments to the then 16-year-old that he shouldn't have, while visiting her father's paint shop all those years ago.

However, as his fame has grown, so Arles has begun to forget Van Gogh the syphilitic, absinthe-addicted neighbour, and started to remember Vincent the "painter's painter". Similarly,

beauty of Japanese prints. He hoped that by escaping the grey skies of Paris for the clear air and bright colours of Provence, he would find a substitute for the real Japan.

Among the places Van Gogh painted in Arles, it is still possible to see roughly what he would have seen at the Trinquetaille Bridge and the sarcophagi in the town's 1,600-year-old burial ground, the Alyscamps Avenue at Arles.

Going out of town, there is a replica of a Dutch-style drawbridge he painted. Reproductions of Van Gogh's paintings have been placed at the sites where he worked, allowing visitors to compare their vision with his.

The first significant step made by the town of Arles to recognise Van Gogh was to reopen the 16th-century hospital in which he stayed after suffering a series of seizures. This became an arts centre, the Espace Van Gogh, in 1974. The courtyard buildings have been repainted orange and white, just as they were in his day, and a helpful reproduction of Van Gogh's painting of the scene is located there, too.

Like many other Impressionist painters, his imagination had been captured by the pretty, nearby town of Saint Rémy, where Van Gogh spent a year in a mental asylum, his impact increases by the year. Now, a cottage industry of guided walks, exhibitions, bars and souvenirs has grown up around this name.

Van Gogh arrived in Arles in February 1888. He came in search of Japan.

Like many other Impressionist painters, his imagination had been captured by the

restored and is open for business once more. But most impressive has been the opening of the Van Gogh Foundation. Here, dozens of internationally famous painters, including David Hockney, Roy Lichtenstein and Francis Bacon, have contributed pictures to a permanent exhibition celebrating the life and work of a man who was one of their biggest inspirations.

After suffering his most serious seizure, which led him to cut off part of his right ear, Van Gogh voluntarily entered himself into the asylum at Saint Rémy, subsequently returning to northern France in 1890, where he committed suicide shortly after.

He made a lasting impression on the asylum, where the inmates of this now all-female institution are taught art as part of their therapy. Outside, in the driveway where he painted irises, there was a bronze bust of the painter. I say "was" because it was stolen, along with three reproductions of his paintings erected close by, several years ago. The thieves have never been caught and their motive remains a mystery.

More recently, the café where Van Gogh painted *Café Terrace at Night*, has been turned into a quiet town of Saint Rémy into a thriving artists' colony. Its Van Gogh Museum displays works of modern art, while more than a hundred painters live in the town, many of whom can be seen hanging out at the Café des Arts at most hours of the day and night.

While I was there, the town held the first of a quarterly series of exhibitions of local painters' work, grandly called the Exhibition of the Painters

have been replaced, you would never know the difference.

Watching the wind rustle through the silvery green leaves and then comparing this reality with his painting of the olive grove, I could see why the locals say he painted the wind, because he captured the wildness of its movement.

Van Gogh's legacy has

of Light. The canvases, of varying quality, were displayed by the artists themselves in clusters along the narrow medieval streets and alleys, and in the main town square.

While looking at these paintings, a fierce Mistral wind blew in from the Mediterranean. It gave me a headache and made my guide, Brigitte, feel "nervous". People are supposed to go mad when it blows, she said. On the other hand, the Mistral makes it easier for the artists to see the object they are painting because it is a dry wind that clears the air, she told me. The effects of the Mistral explain much about Van Gogh the man and Vincent the painter, and is something else nobody can destroy.

The closest airport to Arles that has international flights from the UK is Marseille. Flights from British Airways (0335 221 111) from Gatwick start at £249.80 including taxes, and on KLM UK (0890 074 074) from Stansted at £245 including taxes. Alternatively, Eurolstar (0845 303030) offers services via Lille or Paris, but through ticketing is tricky. It is probably easiest to buy a return to Avignon for £109 and take a local train from there.

The Mistral makes it easier for the artists to see the object they are painting

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SIMON CALDER

The muddle is at its most shambolic in Scotland, which has three schemes...

confused, you soon will be. Not content with imposing language and currency upon the Scots, the English are trying to ordain an entirely new and different grading system on the country.

And if you're still not

Two years ago the AA and RAC teamed up with the English Tourist Board to launch a common system for rating hotels, bed and breakfasts, and guest houses. The idea was to replace three conflicting systems (a star award from each of the motoring organisations, plus the English Tourist Board's crown ratings) with a single grading scheme.

"I'm delighted that we have got the beginning of a much simpler system. For the first time we will have one system common to all three countries," the new tourism minister tells me. Janet Anderson MP is primarily responsible for English tourism, since the Scottish Office and Welsh Office handle tourism within their borders. But she says she hopes that the ETB/AA/RAC scheme will spread across the frontiers.

So a single hotel could be awarded two Scots stars, three

Scots crowns and four English stars - which adds up to a singularly British interpretation of simplification.

Janet Anderson set about her new job by spending most of August touring the country, seeing the best and worst of domestic tourism. Like her predecessors, the minister is faced with the tricky problem of persuading us to holiday at home when foreign trips are so cheap and easy to arrange.

One of the culprits responsible for the widening gap between domestic and foreign holidays is Airtours, a leading practitioner of low-price, accessible packages. Still, at least the company - which employs a thousand people in its headquarters in Rossendale, Lancashire - must be a source of pride for the local MP. Her name? Janet Anderson.

We have stars for hotels, and diamonds for other serviced accommodation, which is a much simpler system. And I think that as people become used to it, the tourist industry generally will want to take advantage of it, because, of course, it will be in their interests to make sure that people understand exactly the type of accommodation they're getting for their money."

But the Scots (and the Welsh, for that matter), have always said that the English scheme just would not work in their domains, and have proceeded to institute their own new classifications. The AA and RAC are turning up and rating hotels in Scotland and Wales anyway, thereby creating a third tier of grading.

So a single hotel could be awarded two Scots stars, three

SOMETHING TO DECLARE

A grand plan: It's always rewarding to learn that readers have been inspired to travel to a place we write about in these pages, but it's not every day we manage to inspire a marathon.

After reading my article about a walk along the Clarendon Way between Winchester and Salisbury which appeared in *The Independent* on 25 October last year, keen runner Paul Elderkin decided to organise a charity marathon along the route, which is conveniently a little more than 26 miles in length. It takes place on 27 September and will be opened by the British 400m runner, Iwan Thomas.

Although it is aimed primarily at regular runners, Paul says that anyone willing to jog is welcome to come along and run part of the course. The aim is to raise money for the Maggie's MRI Scanner Appeal for the Royal Hampshire County Hospital in Winchester and the Patient Monitor Appeal for Salisbury District Hospital.

The route passes through some of Hampshire's and Wiltshire's most picturesque villages and rolling countryside. "We're looking for 500 people to take part," said Mr Elderkin. "I read about the walk and it's on my doorstep. I do a lot of running myself and the course seems ideal. It's a historic area and runners should bear in mind there will be stiles and narrow footpaths."

Mr Elderkin has a maximum limit of 500 entrants and anyone who would like to take part should obtain an application form by writing to: The Race Director, c/o Sports Development Department, Riverside Leisure Centre, Gordon Road, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 7DD. MARK ROWE

A good idea: The end of summer means the best unlimited travel deal in Wales falls in price this month. The Freedom of Wales Flexipass is reduced by £10 to £59 on 28 September. The ticket allows eight days travel out of any 15, at just £7.40 per day. This permits travel on all National Railways in Wales and extends into England as far as Hereford, Shrewsbury, Crewe and Chester. It also covers the Ffestiniog Mountain Railway along a couple of strategic bus routes. Full details in the 1998/99 edition of the Public Transport Map for Wales, free from branches of the Wales Tourist Board, Cardiff, on 01222 227821.

Not such a good idea: Contributions to the autumn edition of *Traveller* magazine.

On safari in East Africa: do not hand over money to the young children begging at the side of the road. Many are missing valuable school time to profit from passing tourists ... The best way to break the chain is not to give anything at all in person. Visitors can contribute by donating medical kits, pens and books to a safari guide who can give them to a bush school or clinic.

"One day, while sipping a cold beer in Thailand, I was solicited yet again, when I hit upon a simple ploy to discourage these approaches ... I explained that I was very religious, being a Roman Catholic priest, and could not possibly consider accepting such an offer. The young lady left quickly. I was just congratulating myself on the effectiveness of my white lie when she returned and said 'Maybe you want boy'."

Mr Elderkin has a maximum limit of 500 entrants and anyone who would like to take part should obtain an application form by writing to: The Race Director, c/o Sports Development Department, Riverside Leisure Centre, Gordon Road, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 7DD. MARK ROWE

'Traveller' magazine is free to members of *Wexas International*; 0171-889 0500 for details of subscriptions

SIMON CALDER



Burano island – a less lavish, miniature Venice, with its own system of canals, bridges and alleyways

Glyn Griffiths

Reflections on a city's secret charm

There's so much to see in Venice that sensory overload is a problem. Linda Cookson offers an off-beat guide to La Serenissima

Thomas Capote once said that visiting Venice was like eating an entire box of chocolate liqueurs in one go. He had a point. Gorgeous as the city is, you can start to hallucinate amidst all that gold leaf and splendour if you try to see everything at once.

Much better to take a breather from the crowds and the glamour. Everybody, but everybody, gets lost in Venice. That's part of the charm of the place, and beyond doubt the best way of finding that delightful little campo or waterside locanda that will become all your own. The secret is to be based in the centre, but to make sure that you do your getting lost well away from the maddening crowds. In the process, you'll start to discover a Venice where the pace is less hectic, where you can relax and enjoy a holiday from guidebook fatigue.

Within mainland Venice, Dorsoduro fits the bill perfectly. That's the

area of the city on the south side of the Grand Canal, across the Accademia Bridge, an enchanting maze of alleys and waterways with its own (less well documented) array of treasures and many of the best restaurants in Venice.

The walk over to Dorsoduro is a pleasure in itself. Leave Piazza San Marco from the western end and by way of a brief diversion, weave your way across into the charming Campo San Fantin, site of a Renaissance church, the Fenice opera house (currently being rebuilt yet again, following the recent fire) and a friendly open-air restaurant called Al Teatro where you can eat outside in far less cramped conditions than in the restaurants near San Marco – and at half the price.

Then head for the Accademia Bridge via Campo Santo Stefano (also known as the Campo Francesco Morosini), a large square that was the site of Venice's last battle in 1802 and is home to two superb palazzi, a Gothic church with

a famously leaning campanile, and various reasonable eateries – among them Paolin, rightly celebrated for its ice-creams.

Already the crowds will be thinning. Once you cross the bridge into Dorsoduro and are out of immediate range of the Accademia Gallery, you will feel that you're in a different city altogether: the quiet, slightly mysterious back-street Venice of countless romantic films.

Ahead, slightly to your left as you cross the bridge is the tree-lined Rio Terra Antonio Foscari, which runs directly south to the Giudecca Canal and forms a useful natural divide between eastern and western parts of Dorsoduro.

To the east of that divide, the walls along the Grand Canal towards the magnificent Basilica di Santa Maria della Salute will take you past the Palazzo Barbaro, where Robert Browning gave readings, Claude Monet painted and Henry James wrote *The Aspern Papers*, and to the eccentric Palazzo Venier dei Leoni

places in this part of Dorsoduro are the leafy courtyard of the Hotel Agi Alboreti, to your right on Rio Terra Antonio Foscari as you walk back from Zattere in the direction of

the Accademia Bridge, and (just off to your right before you reach the bridge) the Al Cugnai restaurant, on Piscina del Forner.

The western section of Dorsoduro is slightly wider and more spacious, the perfect locality for soaking up street-market life. In Campo Santa Barbara are bookbinders and furniture restorers, and as you leave the square you'll be hit by a blaze of colour from the fruit and vegetable boats moored by the flat-topped Ponte dei Pugni.

The narrow Rio Terra Canal street, with its fascinating mask shops, leads you to the lovely Campo di Santa Margherita – a long rectangle bustling with local bars and restaurants, all pleasant for outside eating. Try Linea d'Ombra for fish, or Alle Zattere for pizza.

Other recommended eating places in this part of Dorsoduro are the leafy courtyard of the Hotel Agi Alboreti, to your right on Rio Terra Antonio Foscari as you walk back from Zattere in the direction of

trying to lure you into awful factories, and avoid Torcello, where you'll get mugged by Harold Pinter fans quoting monologues from *Betraysal* and then telling you how cheap it is at the island's Locanda Cipriani restaurant. Instead, take off on a ferry for Burano (Line 14 from near San Marco takes one hour 20 minutes; Line 12 from Fondamente Nuove takes 50 minutes).

Burano is a delight. In one way it's a less lavish miniature of Venice, with its own system of canals, bridges, alleys and so on, yet, by comparison, it is quite charmingly homely and devoid of the ornamentation that can sometimes become almost overpowering in the city in another way, with its brightly painted houses and its local population of lace-makers and fishermen. It resembles nothing so much as a little Greek island – with the unassimilable advantage of serving Italian food.

Most of the restaurants are on Via Baldassarre Galuppi (named after the composer; Burano's most famous son). Most expensive among them is the highly rated Trattoria da Romano, a former favourite of artists and latter-day haunt, so I'm told, of Michael Winner. All of the restaurants are better value than at San Marco or the Rialto.

But for the opposite end of the price range, trot across the footbridge linking Burano to the even tinier island of Mazzorbo and seek out its sole trattoria, Alia Maddalena (beside the landing stage). Cheap, freshly cooked local food in simple surroundings, and not a restaurant critic in sight...

Ryanair (051 569 569) offers return fares from Stansted to Treviso airport (about 19 miles from Venice) starting at £129.20 (including taxes). Travellers must spend two nights or a Saturday night to qualify for the lower fares. For flights to Venice's Marco Polo airport, Italy Sky Shuttle (0181 748 1333) offers return fares from Gatwick starting at £150 (including taxes).

Pelota is a real pain in Spain

It is the fastest game in the world. Eric Kendall tried the macho, bare-handed version

THERE'S NOT a great deal to joking, mate" and "intense pain", managed to get the drift of what my teacher was saying as he wagged his hand with an agonised look on his face. His playing days were clearly over and I was about to find out why. I bounced the rock-like ball in the service area and took a swipe, trying to gauge a sufficient level of ferocity which would get the ball to the front wall while causing minimum trauma to my hand. Falling on both counts, I recovered enough to opt for the karate principle whereby hitting something sufficiently hard turns physics on its head, allowing your hand to travel through bricks. A small rubber ball should have been a piece of cake, but for me it was more like a large lump of concrete.

Despite not knowing the Spanish for "You must be

rescue with a beechwood paddle or "paleta", fat and ungainly with three holes drilled in it to cut down wind resistance. Closer inspection revealed plugs in the end which, I suspect, concealed lead shot.

The noise and feel of bat on ball was the most satisfying sensation in the world. So dense is the ball that it rebounds off the concrete walls with incredible zing, inviting you to pound it ever harder.

Later research revealed that it is made from hand-wound virgin rubber and a bit of linen or nylon thread, topped off with hardened goat skin.

After a few violent rallies to restore my confidence, I had a final paddle-free go. The spirit was willing but the flesh was feeling like steak tartar, so I graciously gave way to two junior champions, Ruben and Nacho, whose 17-year-old hands were about twice as thick as mine. Without any sign of pain they hammered the ball with long, ferocious curve-armed swings, driving it deep to the back of the court.

Moving in long, loping

strides, they stepped into each shot at a half-run for extra impetus. An eye-watering smack resounded round the three walls with each strike.

While pelota a mano is the world's most routinely painful ball game, the glamorous version known as jai alai, which uses a huge wicker scoop to sling the ball, is the world's fastest. The cesta – custom-made from Pyrenean mountain reeds woven over a ribbed frame of chestnut, with a sewn in leather glove – is used to catch and sling the ball in one smooth movement.

Get four people on court with the ball whizzing around at 150mph, and it is not surprising that spectators like to gamble on the outcome – like how many players are going to survive the next point. A squash ball might really sting on the back of the thigh, but in jai alai, it might just take your leg off.

After that kind of excitement, a relaxing bit of gardening – stone-lifting, log-chopping and grass-cutting – could be just what you need.

On the pelota trail

Though most common in the Basque regions of Spain and southern France, forms of pelota are played all over Spain, Mexico and parts of the US. The court can be one, two or three walled and is open to the sides.

Spectators usually watch from

above the back wall and stands along the side.

Jai alai is played on the biggest courts which are more than 50 metres long.

Playing pelota requires persistence. The club at Casa de los Navarros, Paseo/Passeig Maragall 375-381, 08032 Barcelona is a friendly place where you might get a game between 6pm and 9pm. Call the club secretary, Rosalia, if your Spanish is good (0334 93 420 450) or fax: 0334 93 429 4727.

Spectating is a more likely option; lookout for posters in towns and villages advertising professional games, most of which seem to be played at 10pm or later. If betting on the nags is a bit of a mystery to you, prepare yourself for untold complexity and confusion when it comes to pelota.

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JAI ALAI



you should feel no guilt about loading up with bargains. The "Silk Alley" market, just near the US Embassy, is well-frequented by both foreigners and Chinese and, with some stern negotiations over price, offers genuine brand name items to obvious counterfeits, from smart suits to anoraks. For ordinary consumer goods, there is Hong Qiao market, opposite the east gate of Tianan Park, although those with catastrophic tendencies should avoid the weekend crush.

On the third floor is the popular pearl market, its stalls run by peasant girls from Zhejiang province who have been transformed into very rich businesswomen. The early-morning weekend outdoor curio market just west of Panjiayuan Bridge on the east side of the Third Ring Road is fun, but get there before 8am.

Everything in China is negotiable, but some naive tourists still get fleeced. If anyone starts calling you "lao pengyou" (old friend), you can assume you are about to be had. And remember, nothing you buy can possibly really be Ming dynasty.

Between them, Air China (0171-630 0919) and British Airways (0345 222111) fly daily, non-stop, between Heathrow and Peking. Lower fares and more choice can be found on flights to the Hong Kong Special Autonomous Region of China. British passport holders need no visa to enter Hong Kong, but beyond that you need a Chinese visa, which is most easily obtained through the China Travel Service, 7 Upper St Martin's Lane, London WC2H 9DL (0171-836 3689); this agency charges £10 on top of the normal £25 fee. You need your passport, a completed application form and one photograph. Allow a week for processing. You can obtain a visa more quickly in Hong Kong if you are travelling to China via the SAR and pay only HK\$100 (about £8).

Peking daze – in a hi-tech age most of the city's 11 million people are still leading very low-tech lives

Seth Joel/Colorific

Power to the people

Explore the Great Wall and the Forbidden City – then see the real Peking. By Teresa Poole

exception. The country's centrally-planned heavy industries were hopelessly over-manned for decades and are now being forced to shed workers by the millions. Stop and talk (with the help of your tourist guide) to people hawking goods on the pavement, and the odds are that they were "sent home" by some loss-making local factory. If they are lucky, they will still be receiving a subsistence wage, but others have been left to fend for themselves, often opting for life as a street trader or setting up a mobile food stall.

Departing from the normal tourist trail, take a taxi out the Capital Iron and Steel Works in the

far West of the city. This is one of China's giant state-owned enterprises, with 218,000 people on its payroll, one-third of whom are not needed. It's unlikely that a tourist will be able to talk his way through the front gate, but even from outside the perimeter fence, one can appreciate how these mammoth state factories functioned as self-sufficient towns, with housing, schools and even hospitals all part of the cradle-to-grave "iron rice bowl" which is now being dismantled. When the urban hell gets too much, continue westward out of the city to the tranquillity of the Tanzhe temple, a serene spot usually deserted during the week.

For a complete contrast, head back to the north-west of the city, towards the university district, to investigate Zhongguancun, the thriving computer centre of Peking. Adverts on the windows of the dozens of small shops give the prices of components which upstairs are assembled to your specification within 24 hours. Outside on the streets, pirate CDs and CD-ROMs can be purchased very cheaply, in between the occasional appearance of the "Intellectual Property Police".

A trip to one of the city's Internet cafes to send messages home to Britain can round off an afternoon in "New China", before checking the new local English-language fortnightly guides, *City Edition* and *Metro*, to decide on the evening's restaurant, concert, or disco.

For a glimpse of how large numbers of ordinary Pekingers still live, go for a wander in the historic hutongs to the north-east of Tianan (Temple of Heaven) Park. There are other parts of Peking where beautiful courtyard houses have been lovingly restored by millionaire Hong Kong businessmen or newly-rich locals.

But most of the dilapidated traditional one-storey homes in Peking provide cramped living quarters, devoid of both privacy and modern conveniences. Everyone has a television, but no one has a bathroom.

During the day, the old people are often at home, and with suitable tact (and perhaps a small gift), you can venture into some of the entrance yards. The public toilets and bathhouses can be found along the main hutongs. The question is what to do about rehousing people, but also preserving something of old Peking. The city's government is currently clearing many of these old neighbourhoods, usually for commercial development, and relocating people into apartments out in the suburbs. But little is being done to conserve something of the past.

Shopping is a major Chinese pastime, so after all the sight-seeing

Unemployment is the scourge of China's late 1990s, and Peking is no

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requirements, low-cost airport car parking while you're away, and theme park tickets in advance, like the newly introduced 6-day Florida Fast Pass which gives 5 days at Walt Disney World and a whole day at Universal Studios Florida, plus Planet Hollywood, for an all-inclusive price of only £188 (adult) and £149 (child).

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THEATRE
COUNTRYWIDE

HIS MAJESTY'S Girls' Night Out. Hen-night comedy by Dave Simpson. 5 Sept. 8pm & Sun. £16.50-£7.50. concs avail.

The Rocky Horror Show Jason Donovan stars in the 25th anniversary tour of the classic Rock'n'Roll musical. Opens 7 Sept., Mon-Fri 7.30pm, Sat 6pm & 9pm, ends 12 Sept. £8.50-£17.50 (Mon-Thu) £9.50-£19.50 (Fri & Sat). Rosemount Viaduct (01244-641122)

BIRMINGHAM **HIPPODROME** The Phantom Of The Opera Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical adaptation of the novel about a tragic love affair between an opera singer and a disfigured composer. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, matc. Wed 2pm, Sat 2.30pm, ends 24 Sept. £10-£30. Hurst Street (0121-622 7486)

EDINBURGH **ASSEMBLY ROOMS** Lakeboat And Mambo's latest drama comes to Edinburgh as a sell-out run at the Lyric, Hammett's. 5 Sept. 12noon. £9-£10. concs £6.95. Three Men In A Boat (To Say Nothing Of The Dog) Starring Rodney Bewes. 5 Sept. 5pm. £8-£9. concs £7-£8.

Disco Pigs Corso's acclaimed production of Enda Walsh's tongue-twisting look at night out Cork. 5 Sept. 7pm. £9-£9.50. concs £7.50-£8.50. Krays: Tape Edward徘徊 performances Beckett's lesser-known piece looking at old age and nostalgia. 5 Sept. 8.30pm. £9. concs £8. George Street (0131-624 2442)

KING'S THEATRE Phére Jean Racine's classic tragedy about a vulnerable widow is performed in French with English surtitles. 5 Sept. 7.30pm. £5-£22. Leven Street (0131-437 2000/2000 cc 437 2000)

CALDER'S GILDED BALLOON AT THE PALLADIUM An Evening Of Spoken Word With Henry Rollins. 5 Sept. 10pm. £10. concs £8. Broughton Place (0131-557 1854/226 6550/c 226 2515)

ROYAL LYCEUM Britannia Rules Liz Lochhead's charming tale of four young Glaziers. From 11 Sept. Fri-Sat. 7.45pm, ends 3 Oct. £7-£12.50 (Tue-Thu), £8-£15 (Fri-Sat). concs available. Grindlay Street (0131-229 9697)

ROYAL LYCEUM More Stately Mansions. Eugene O'Neill's unfinished play about a love triangle. Continues. 5 Sept. 6.30pm. £8-£11. concs available. Hope Street (0151-709 4776)

MANCHESTER LIBRARY THEATRE Jake's Women Neil Simon's comedy about a New York writer looking to make a name from fantasy. From 11 Sept. Mon-Thu. Fri-Sat. 8pm. ends 10 Oct. £8-£15. Quarry Hill Mount (0131-213 7700)

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE THEATRE CRAVE New drama from Sarah Kane, looking at the love, loss and desire. 5 Sept. phone for details. Cambridge Street (0191-228 1404)

TRAVESSIE THEATRE Perfect Days Siobhan Redmond stars as a thirty-something celebrity hairdresser in Liz Lochead's new romantic comedy. 5 Sept. 1.45pm. £12. concs £7.50.

Crave New drama from Sarah Kane, looking at love, loss and desire. 5 Sept. 8pm. £9. concs £6. Cambridge Street (0191-228 1404/cc 228 1404)

GLASGOW ARCHES THEATRE Politics In The Park Comic gem with an air of smug innocence between two old-style skins. Looking much more at the barbs and quips than sex. 8-12 Sept. 7.30pm. £5. concs £3 (EB, concs £5 if bought with Final Fling).

Final Fling A black comedy about four friends awaiting the decisive visit of a BBC producer at the end of the 1987 Edinburgh Festival. 8-12 Sept. 8.30pm. £5. concs £3 (EB, concs £5 if buying a ticket for Politics In The Park). Midland Street (0141-221 4001)

KING'S THEATRE Blood Brothers Willy Russell's class-consciousness musical set in Liverpool. 5 Sept. 3pm & 7.30pm. £24.50-£20. concs available. Kat And The Kings Musical set in 1950s Cape Town. 7-10 Sept. 7.30pm. T1 & 12 Sept. 5.30pm & 8.30pm. Sat 8 Sept. 2.30pm. £5-£10. concs available. Bath Street (0141-287 5511)

PAVILION THEATRE The Celtic Story A musical play with Dorothy Paul and Jimmy Logan about the history of Celtic Football Club. 5 Sept. 2pm & 7.30pm. £5-£10. concs available. Renfield Street (0141-332 1846)

HALIFAX THE VIADUCT Samson Agonistes Northern Broadsides' staging of Milton's powerful poem. From 11 Sept. Mon-Sat. 7.45pm, ends 19 Sept. £9.50. concs £7.50. Dean Clough Industrial Park (01422-250243)

HUDDERSFIELD LAWRENCE BATLEY THEATRE Muscle Comedy about a group of people who enrol at the gym in an attempt to revive their sagging bodies and egos. 10-12 Sept. 7.30pm. £4-£10. concs available. Queen Street (01484-430528/c 430528)

LEEDS YORKSHIRE PLAYHOUSE COURTYARD THEATRE Disco Disc-A-Clash A contemporary comedy from Enda Walsh. 7-10 Sept. 7.30pm. 11 Sept. 8pm. £9. concs £6. Quarry Hill Mount (0113-213 7700)

WEST YORKSHIRE PLAYHOUSE QUARRY THEATRE Pictures At The Lapin Agile Steve Martin's comedy about a hypothetical meeting between Albert Einstein and Pablo Picasso. From 10 Sept. Mon-Sat. 8pm. ends 10 Oct. £5-£15.50. Quarry Hill Mount (0113-213 7700)

STPHEN JOSEPH THEATRE THE ROUND Comic Potential Alan Ayckbourn's new comedy is the first in a season of ten plays performed by ten actors. In rep. 10-12 Sept. 1.10pm, continuing. £4. Westborough (01723-370541)

STPHEN JOSEPH THEATRE: THE OTHER PLACE Roberto Zucco Drama inspired by a wanted poster written by Koltès and directed by James Macdonald. Last perf. 5 Sept. 7.30pm, continues in rep until 5 Sept. 12-19. Southern Lane (01789-255623)

ROYAL SHAKESPEARE THEATRE Twelfth Night: Adrienne Noble directs Shakespeare's most popular play for the RSC. Last perf. 5 Sept. 1.30pm & 7.30pm. £5-£27. Waterside (01789-255623)

SWAN THEATRE The Two Gentlemen Of Verona Shakespeare's witty comedy is directed by Edward Hall. Last perf. 5 Sept. 1.30pm & 7.30pm. £5-£27. Waterside (01789-255623)

THE BLUE ROOM Nicole Kidman stars in David Hare's adaptation of Schnitzler's *La Ronde*. Donmar Warehouse Earlham Street, WC2 (0171-369 1732) Covent Garden. From Sept. 10. Mon-Sat. 8pm, booking to 31 Oct. £12-£25.

CLEO, CAMPING, EMMANUELLE AND DICK Terry Johnson's new play looks at the Carry On actors and recreates Sid James, Kenneth Williams and Babe Windsor on stage. National Theatre, Lyttelton South Bank, SE1 (0171-452 3000) BR/Waterloo in rep. 5-7, 9-11 Sept. 7.30pm, 10 Sept. 7pm, continuing. £B-£27.

PITLOCHRY FESTIVAL THEATRE Hay Fever Noel Coward's classic farce. In rep. 5 & 8 Sept. 8pm, mat 9 Sept. 2pm, continuing. £12.50-£15. Funny Money Ray Cooney's farce. In rep. 7 & 10 Sept. 8pm, mat 5 Sept. 2pm, ends 10 Oct. £12.50-£15. concs available.

TAURUS A BLOCK today in something important - your drains, your emotional plans, your hairstyle strategies. Abrupt withdrawal from existing connections may clear the floor. Your essential steadiness and ability to general your forces will help you cope. While your cheerfulness may become more than usually juvenile, creative powers will wax; it will be hard, however, to set a good example for children (if such creatures exist any more).

GEMINI TODAY YOU are particularly mercurial. Your mind is fast, your tongue is sharp, your family is cowering in corners hoping you won't notice them. But if you want to change the world, start with yourself, booby boots. However, a certain commonsense seems to take over - perhaps for once medication will not be needed to slow you enough for people (that includes you) to see your essential self. On Friday you may need camouflage.

CANCER YOU ARE surrounded by battered romantics and bruised mystics (that's your fault, you're so argumentative). But in your study of the anatomy of passion don't forget about the soul that must be there among the trash of flesh. You have a tendency to confess too much, but don't be tempted to take off all your veils at once. You deserve to be happy if you believe Ricki Lake; but if you believe that you'll believe anything.

LEO YOU NEED time to recuperate; repairs are essential, particularly below the waterline. Things have been happening under the surface that may damage you (because you'd rather not know about them). You will make resolutions, you'll try on new morsels to see if they fit. But don't get finicky; you are a big-picture person (murals, billboards). If your new moral system doesn't accommodate this important point - deck it. Above all, you may be feeling that you've seen it all before.

VIRGO "TYPICAL" PEOPLE say of you today. Why do they resent your intelligent criticisms? You're only trying to be constructive, you say, but they can see it isn't true. There is no bush big enough to conceal the pharasaical pleasure you take in your own virtue. But as the heavens revolve, a kindness informs your insights and even your tendency to lecture will come out the right way (until Friday, when the underworld breaks out).

LIBRA IT'S AN unfortunate day: if you've taken the precaution of drinking heavily last night you'd do well to stay in bed. A sense of incompatibility may break an essential circuit, but this can be completed by Wednesday. The reasons you want are unobtainable, and do you think you'd understand? Blithe spirits provide a crescendo climaxing on Friday's Venus/Mercury conjunction for which there's only one word: Phwoah!

SCORPIO You have a dangerous oversupply of strength and courage. Character consists of keeping out of the way of fools, not conquering them. Your explosive talents are in danger of leaving you vulnerable to a sort of emotional paralysation. Gratuitous nudity (a concept you said could never exist) may be important in relieving stress. But there is something coiling in the darkness: grip it without allowing it to grip you.

PISCES IT'S MARVELLOUS how strange you can be without exciting comment. Even in your idleness you will attract more than you deserve. Your submarine intuitions will help you in a worldly sense; barriers dissolve as you approach them; there are no boundaries, and no real limits to your appetites. It's like a psychedelic experience (oh, wow, breakfast!) but your ability to get others to do the work for you may backfire in the end.

ARIES AN ASPECT OF Mars and Uranus faintly but distinctly increases the likelihood of your being assassinated on Monday. It may be advisable even for non-believers to go to church on Sunday. If the assassins are only after your character, your robustness will carry the day. An urge to penetrate great mysteries may decay into a tendency towards drink, even dipsomania. Oh well, it's the cheapest form of travel.

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The Importance Of Being Earnest Oscar Wilde's comedy of unlikely coincidences. In rep. 9 Sept. 8pm, 24-26 Oct. £12.50-£16.50 concs available.

KAT AND THE KINGS Musical set in 1950s Cape Town. 7-10 Sept. 7.30pm. T1 & 12 Sept. 5.30pm & 8.30pm. Sat 8 Sept. 2.30pm. £5-£10. concs available. Bath Street (0141-287 5511)

PAVILION THEATRE The Celtic Story A musical play with Dorothy Paul and Jimmy Logan about the history of Celtic Football Club. 5 Sept. 2pm & 7.30pm. £5-£10. concs available. Bath Street (0141-287 5511)

SCARBOROUGH STEPHEN JOSEPH THEATRE: MCCARTHY AUDITORIUM Sweet Phoebe Michael Gow's comedy about a dog who worms her way into her mistress' house and hearts. In rep. 9 Sept. 8pm, continuing. £12.50-£15. concs available. Bath Street (01484-430528/c 430528)

BEDFORD BARBER INSTITUTE OF FINE ARTS Animals In Art includes work by Delacroix and Goya. Mon-Sat 10am-5pm. Sun 2pm-5pm, ends 27 Sept. free. Edgbaston (0121-414 7333)

BIRMINGHAM BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM & ART GALLERY Oscar Wilde And His Circle. Depicting Roberts' Acclaimed abstract painter Mon-Sun 10am-5pm, ends 20 Sept. £2.50, concs £1.90, child £1.90. The Barracks (0121-303 4243)

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL LYCEUM GALLERIES Schubert's 8th Symphony (Pathétique) 5 Sept. 8pm, £6-£6.50. Czech Philharmonic/Mackerras.

BIRMINGHAM BEETHOVEN'S 5th Piano Concerto, played by Stephen Hough. Mon-Sat 8pm, £5-£31. Broad Street (0121-213 3333)

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL LYCEUM MUSEUM & ART GALLERY Queen's Hall 100th Anniversary 5 Sept. 8pm, £12.50-£16.50. Wards End (0121-303 3511)

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL NORTHERN COLLEGE OF MUSIC

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SUNDAY TELEVISION & RADIO

BBC1

7.30 Children's BBC: Mr Benn (267/983). **7.45 Teletubbies** (8124728). **8.30 Breakfast with Frost** (84857). **9.30 Heaven and Earth Show** (87341). **10.30 Top Gear** (40457). **11.00 Porridge** (5362). **11.30 Country File on Sunday** (1051). **12.00 News** (4052709). **12.05 Argument** (970457). **1.00 EastEnders** (5431728).

2.25 FILM: *And Then There Were None* (Peter Cullinan 1974 UK). Agatha Christie thriller (T) (80889).

4.00 Children's BBC: *Newround* (S) (6472631). **4.20 Cartoon** (676273). **4.35 Great Antiques Hunt** (748099). **5.30 Cartoon** (847631). **5.30 News;** **Weather** (5288032). **5.40 Local News;** **Weather** (572419). **5.45 Songs of Praise** (894436).

6.20 FILM: *Batteries Not Included* (Matthew Robinson 1987 US). Pensioners enlist the help of a pair of sentient flying saucers to save their homes from the clutch of developers. Over-sugared sci-fi with Jessica Tandy and Hume Cronyn (76331051).

8.00 Casualty. Part two of last night's school fire episode (S) (T) (9041).

9.20 CHOICE: *Big Cat.* Disturbing love story (S) (T) (4465273). See *Drama of the Day*, below.

10.15 News; Weather (T) (785780).

10.30 FILM: *The Big Easy* (Jim McBride 1987 US). Homicide detective Dennis Quaid investigates irregularities in his New Orleans police department (S) (T) (4577254).

12.40 FILM: *Runaway Heart* (James Frawley 1987 US). Cuckolded housewife Jill Elkberry finds romance when she's kidnapped by robber Michael Tucker (S) (4632821).

1.40 Joins BBC News 24 (5412991). To 6am.

BBC2

6.10 Open University: *Outsiders In*. **7.00 Mozambique Under Attack** (1737506). **7.25 Approaching Literature:** *Building the Perfect Beast* (748893). **8.45 Italianissimo** (2459728). **8.30 Children's BBC:** *Brum* (9716709). **8.40 Gadjet Guy** (698083). **9.05 Sweet Valley High** (319549). **9.30 Fully Booked** (S) (212373). **12.00 Cartoon** (22061). **12.30 Robot Wars** (58864). **1.00 Grandstand** (8083448). **1.05 Equestrianism** (389534). **1.45 Touring Cars** (97394457). **2.30 Cricket AXA Sunday League** (2648998). **3.30 Equestrianism** (2677341). **4.30 Touring Cars** (6467709).

4.35 Cricket (56293612).

6.15 Motorcycling. Rounds 17 and 18 of the Motorcycle News British superbike championship (257544).

6.45 Star Trek: Voyager. The ship is overwhelmed by a strange gelatinous life form. William Shatner guest-starring, perhaps? (S) (T) (786709).

7.30 Star Trek: Voyager. An old friend of Neelix tricks him into shipping narcotics (S) (T) (699235).

8.15 Timewatch. Charting the early history of the tank, from its inauspicious beginnings on the Somme (R) (S) (380612).

9.00 Whatever Happened to the Likely Lads? (R) (6728).

9.30 The Princess's People: A View from the Crowd. An unsentimental observation of the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales (S) (T) (2302877).

10.45 CHOICE: *Westworld* (Michael Crichton 1973 US). (S) (T) (36334235). See *Film of the Day*, below.

12.35 FILM: *M* (Fritz Lang 1931 Ger). Genuinely creepy horror classic. Stars Peter Lorre (3091281).

1.50 Close. 2.04 BBC Learning Zone: Scientists and Inventors 1 (35228). **4.00 Languages:** *Get By in French*, Part 1 (655020). **5.00 Business and Training** (7937200). **5.45 Children First** (5487939). To 6am.

ITV LWT

6.00 GMTV (79615). **8.00 Children's ITV:** *Diggit* (9208544). **9.25 Tiny Toon Adventures** (912709). **9.30 Men in Black** (755970). **10.45 Favourite Hymns** (695047). **10.45 Morning Worship** (856964). **11.45 Link** (7133815). **12.00 Holy Smoke** (26877). **12.30 Crosstalk** (45490). **1.00 News;** **Weather** (5799563). **1.10 Westminster Woman** (21867). **2.00 Capital Gains** (6761). **2.30 Big Screen** (S) (T) (364438). **3.05 Making of The Horse Whisperer** (R) (6285544).

3.35 FILM: *The Natural* (Barry Levinson 1984 US). Mystical baseball fable with Robert Redford (S) (T) (36089815).

6.00 Catchphrase. Roy Walker hosts the family game show (R) (S) (T) (631).

6.30 London Weekend Tonight (T) (6707).

6.45 News; **Weather** (T) (801693).

7.00 You've Been Framed! Lisa Riley with more camcorder chaos (7877).

7.30 Coronation Street. Sally comes under attack. Rita and Alec come up with a novel idea (T) (167).

8.00 Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? (S) (T) (6525).

8.30 Heartbeat. New series. A mysterious case of food poisoning follows a neighbourly dispute, and Greengrass becomes the owner of a python (T) (63761).

9.30 CHOICE: *The Jump.* New four-parter starring Adrian Dunbar and Susan Vidler (S) (T) (45506). See *Serial of the Day*, below.

10.30 ITN News; **Weather** (T) (790815).

10.45 Beach Boys - Endless Harmony. Two-part pop-documentary (S) (T) (309633).

11.45 FILM: *Klute* (Alan J Pakula 1971 US). Well-thought-of psychological thriller with Donald Sutherland and Jane Fonda (53807593).

1.55 In Bed with Mediocre (R) (S) (6305378). **2.25 Not Fade Away** (R) (S) (6750804). **3.05 Motor Racing** (S) (363219). **4.25 Night Shift** (3643326). **4.30 Nightrun** (56259). **5.30 ITN Morning News** (50281). To 6am.

Channel 4

6.30 The Pink Panther (632322). **6.35 Little Dracula** (559949). **7.00 Divide** (3389902). **7.30 Hullabaloo** (522640). **7.30 Sharky and George** (1506). **8.00 Beer Nice** (6501341). **8.25 Odyssey** (4297032). **8.30 Doug** (268977). **9.25 Saved by the Bell** (5193051). **9.50 City Guys** (7557322). **10.15 Walton** (733570). **11.00 Hollywood** (4857729). **12.00 Real World** (718167). **12.40 Buzz** (747815). **1.30 Riding the Tiger** (6299564). **1.40 Arrivederci Brum** (9348834).

3.35 Don't Stop the Music (2497099).

4.35 FILM: *Ice Cold in Alex* (J Lee Thompson 1988 UK). Alcoholic army officer goes to Alexandria with two nurses, a South African soldier and an ambulance. *Classic Second World War drama* now also recognised for having been part of a later adver-

Stas John "Lockjaw" Mills (21812051).

7.05 FILM: *A Shot in the Dark* (Blake Edwards 1968 US). *Pink Panther* sequel. Clouseau investigates the case of a chambermaid suspected of shooting her lover. Corpses soon follow in his wake (T) (9035025).

9.00 Arthouse. Spends a year following a broadway musical production from writing to performance. The epic is aided by the fact that the production in question was singer Paul Simon's theatrical debut, *The Capeman*, which was eaten alive by the critics, and closed after 68 shows (4525).

10.30 FILM: *Romeo Is Bleeding* (Peter Medak 1992 US). Tragic cop thriller with Gary Oldman as a police officer in league with the mob (51406802).

12.35 FILM: *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues* (Gus Van Sant 1994 US). (S0113).

2.20 Penn and Teller (R) (S) (T) (4968007).

2.55 FILM: *Jacquot de Nantes* (Agnes Varda 1991 Fr). (4729262).

5.05 Lonely Planet (R) (S) (T) (787649). To 5.55am.

Channel 5

6.00 Hot Property (4492148). **6.30 Havakazzo** (3029363). **7.00 Dapplewood Farm** (867728). **7.30 Millshake** (5830544). **7.35 Winzie** (1907815). **8.00 Do You Believe In?** (9012032). **8.30 Alpha Zone** (904453). **9.00 Roobarb** (5111940). **9.15 Pitch, Hit and Run** (7304709). **9.30 New Adventures of Robin Hood** (7611896). **10.20 Mag Special:** Bjork (1597780). **11.30 Singled Out** (7935148). **12.00 Darla** (8022449). **12.30 News;** **Sport** (8668815).

1.30 FILM: *Alpha Zone* (5111940). **2.00 Relationships Week** (6504235). **2.45 Film:** *The Roots of Ranchipur* (42836493). **3.35 Our House** (8476761). **3.40 Catchphrase** (834761). **4.00 Comedy News** (6101007). **4.15 Johnnie and the Moon** (5206520). **5.00 Soap** (8706520). **5.00 Members Only** (6752353). **5.00 Nightrun** (24858). **5.00 Coronation St** (47561).

6.30 The Diana Years (S) (T) (3802457). **As LWT except:** **12.30 Lifeline** (175431). **12.35 Newsweek** (302431). **1.00 Central News** (50374051). **2.00 Headlines** (6761). **2.30 Relationships Week** (6504235). **2.45 Film:** *The Roots of Ranchipur* (42836493). **3.35 Our House** (8476761). **3.40 Catchphrase** (834761). **4.00 Comedy News** (6101007). **4.15 Johnnie and the Moon** (5206520). **5.00 Soap** (8706520). **5.00 Nightrun** (24858). **5.00 Coronation St** (47561).

6.30 Virgin Gardeners. Bulbs for spring colour and how to tell weeds from desirable plants (S) (4487877).

7.00 Wild Secrets. The Mojave Desert in California: a place of extremes, from the summer heat of Death Valley to winter snow on the cactus of the high desert (S) (T) (7904728).

8.00 Tsunami: Killer Waves. Documentary about tsunami waves which can reach speeds of up to 500 miles per hour (T) (7980148).

9.00 FILM: *Alien Nation: Dark Horizon* (1995). Feature-length episode has an underground organisation, the Purists, attempting to kill off the alien population with a new virus (T) (7787754).

10.50 Sex Life. Sexual revolution. Sex is big business, apparently. You learn something new every day. Dressed-up titillation with Vanessa Collingridge (R) (S) (T) (5069059).

11.40 The Comedy Store (S) (673457). **12.10 Motor Racing - the Fedex Championship** (S) (314674). **12.55 Baseball - Live** (S) (7458951). **4.40 Monsters** (3726571). **5.05 Thrill** (3650420). **5.30 Period Rooms** (R) (S) (T) (43886533). To 6am.

ITV/Regions

BBC1

N Ireland 2.25 In My Own Way

2.55 Listen in Focus 3.35 4.00

Home Truths

Wales 10.30 Mad on Science

10.35 Mad on Science

11.05 Big Easy 12.45 Film: Runaway

Hear 12.45 8.00 BBC News 24

Anglia

As LWT except 12.30 Anglia

News Sunday Supplement (45490)

2.00 Great Places of the East (6761)

2.30 Beatles Hot Shots (6023)

3.00 News 24

Countdown (204901). 5.45

On the Box (634849). 6.05 The Series (855254). 6.31 Anglo News (807251). 6.45 Film: Gorby Park (6162017). 6.52 Charlie Grimes (8770652). 3.30 Moto Racing (6205620). 4.03 Members Only (6752353). 4.30 Nightrun (24858). 5.00 Coronation St (47561).

Central

As LWT except 12.30 Lifeline

(175431). 12.35 Newsweek

SATURDAY RADIO

PICK OF THE DAY

FOOD IS the order of the day on Radio 1. First off is *The Food Programme* (11am-12pm), in which Simon Parker concludes his investigation into how Italian flavours have permeated English cuisine, from local Italian delis and trattorias to the sundried products on Sainsbury's shelves. Some of the most important international agreements were reached over a good feed,

discovers Leslie Forbes (right) in the first edition of *A History of War and Peace in Four Menus* (2.30pm R4FM). As she recreates their cuisine, Forbes takes us to 18th-century India and the Battle of Plassey, investigating the role played by Clive of India in the treaty that led to the creation of the British Raj.



FIONA STURGES

Radio 1
(97.6-99.8MHz FM)
10.00 Mark Goodier: **10.00 Chris Moyles**: 1.00 Lisa Anson: **3.00 Radio 1's R'n'B Chart**: **5.00 Judge Jules**: **7.00 Danny Rampling - Lovegrove Dance Party**: **9.00 Westwood**: **10.00 1 Rap Show**: **12.00 Radio 1 Reggae Dancehall Nite**: **2.00 Essential Mix**: **3.00 Lockdown**: **4.00 - 6.00 Anthe Nightingale**.

Radio 2
(88.902MHz FM)
6.00 Mo Dutta: **6.05 Brian Matthew**: **10.00 Steve Wright's Saturday Show**: **10.00 The Monkhouse Archive**: **1.30 What on Earth?**: **2.00 Alan Freeman**: **3.30 Johnnie Walker**: **5.30 Paul Gambaccini**: **7.00 Buddy in Britain**: **8.00 Chris de Burgh in Concert**: **8.00 Big Oceans Caribbean Sunshine**: **10.00 Bob Harris**: **1.00 Charles Lowe**: **4.00 - 7.00 Mo Dutta**.

Radio 3
(90.2-92.4MHz FM)
6.00 On Air: **9.00 Record Breakers**: **12.00 Private Passions**: **1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert**: **2.00 Vintage Years**: **3.30 Spitalfields Festival**: **9.50 Jazz Record Requests**: **6.00 Swinging with Uncle Joe**: **6.30 I Flagrant**.

2.30 BBC Proms: **9.30 Tonight at the Royal Albert Hall**, the European Union Youth Orchestra scales a Strauss mountain with guest conductor Vladimir Ashkenazy, and showcases the winning work in the recent Master-prize competition to find powerful new orchestral pieces. As a contrast, they explore the sound world of Berg's lush late-romantic songs. Hillevi Martinelli (soprano), European Union Youth Orchestra/Vladimir Ashkenazy. Andrew March: *Marine à travers les arbres*; Berg: *Seven Early Songs*. **8.00 Forty Years On**: Vladimir Ashkenazy talks to Stephanie Hughes about his career as a pianist and conductor. **8.20 Concert**, part 2: Strauss: *An Alpine Symphony*. **9.40 Books Abroad**: Novelist Tibor Fischer opens a literary window on

the world, getting to the heart of the culture of other countries through books. In this programme: Hans Magnus Enzensberger as publisher, a literary tour behind the tourist facade of Prague, a publishing dream turned sour in Budapest, and bedtime stories from Poland. **10.30 Spitalfields Festival**: **9.50 Brindisi Quartet**: **Double Exposure**: Barber: *String Quartet*: Op 1 (2nd mvt); Adam Gorb: *Violin Sonata* (first performance); Chausson: *Concerto* in D, Op 21. **11.30 Jazz on 3**: **1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night**.

Radio 4
(92.4-94MHz FM)
6.00 News Briefing: **6.05 Sports Desk**: **6.30 Open Country**: **6.57 Weather**: **7.00 Today**: **9.00 Home Truths**: **10.00 News; Loose Ends**: **11.00 News; The Food Programme**, See *Pick of the Day*: **11.30 From Our Own Correspondent**: **12.00 News; Money Box**: **12.30 The News Quiz**: **12.55 Weather**: **1.00 News**: **1.45 The Commission**: **2.00 News; The Commission Call** (0771 580 4444). **2.30 A History of War and Peace in 4 Menus**, See *Pick of the Day*.

3.00 News; The Dark Horse: **4.00 News; Weekend Women's Hour**: **5.00 Saturday PM**: **5.30 Talking Pictures**: **5.54 Shipping Forecast**: **5.57 Weather**: **6.04 Six O'Clock News**: **6.55 Saturday Night Fry**: **7.00 Saturday Review**: **7.45 Tonight's Homework**: **Hwee Hwee Tan grew up in Singapore, and all she remembers about it is school. As the joke goes: How do you know your parents are Asian? When the only English words they know are Oxford, Harvard and MIT.** **8.00 The Archive Hour**: **Eating Their Words**: Martin Wainwright looks at the propaganda of food, from the pronouncements of politicians to the advertising and the celebrity chef. **9.00 News; The Classic Serial**: **Rites of Passage**: By William Golding, adapted by Don Taylor: **2/3**: Talbot's dislike of Parsons Colley turns to disgust after an astonishing evening's entertainment. Then a tragedy forces him to revise his opinion. With Samuel West, Simon Russell Beale and Kenneth Haigh. Director: Don Taylor. **10.00 News and Weather**: **10.45 Inside Out**: Lesley Riddoch in the heart of Edinburgh's red-light district for a debate on controlling prostitution. **11.00 News; The Music That Binds Us**: Four programmes about how people share music within relationships: Sue McGarry talks to Russell Grant

and his lifelong friend Shirley Stanfield about the music they have heard together that represents their angst, friendship and joint sense of fun. **11.30 Cartoons, Lampoons and Buffoons** (R): **12.00 News**: **12.25 Experimental Feature**: **Startales**: **12.30 The Late Story**: **The Vehicular Dispatch**: **12.45 Shipping Forecast**: **1.00 As World Service**: **5.30 World News**: **5.35 Shipping Forecast**: **5.40 Inshore Forecast**: **5.50 - 6.00 Bells on Sunday**: **Sunday Start**.

Classic FM
(100.1-101.9MHz FM)
6.00 Sarah Lucas: **8.00 Countdown**: **11.00 Masters of Their Art**: **12.00 Mike Read**: **3.00 Margaret Howard**: **6.00 Classic FM at the Movies**: **7.00 Smooth Classics at Seven**: **9.00 Opera Guide**: **10.00 The Classic Quiz**: **12.00 Midnight Music**: **2.00 Evening Concert**: **4.00 - 6.00 Sunday Start**.

Virgin Radio
(125.1-127.2MHz kHz MW)
6.00 Jeremy Clark: **10.00 Mark Forrest**: **2.00 Rock 'n' Roll Football**: **6.00 Johnny Boy's Wheels of Steel**: **10.00 James Mennit**: **2.00 - 6.00 Howard Pearce**.

World Service
(193kHz LW)
10.00 The NatWest Trophy Final: **12.00 News Headlines; Shipping Forecast**: **12.04 - 1.00 The NatWest Trophy Final**: **1.55 - 5.54 The NatWest Trophy Final**: **5.57 - 7.00 The NatWest Trophy Final**.

Radio 5 Live
(89.905kHz MW)
6.00 Dirty Tackie: **6.30 Breakfast**: **9.00 Chiles on Saturday**: **11.00 Move It**: **11.30 The Scoop**: **12.00 Sportscall**: **1.00 Sport on Five**: **Football commentary**: **5.30 - 6.00 Global Business**.

Talk Radio
6.00 Paul Ross and Carol McGiffin: **9.00 Sean Bolger**: **11.30 Danny Baker and Danny Kelly**: **1.00 Premiership Show** with Alan Mullery: **3.00 Nationwide League Live Commentary**: **5.30 Danny Baker and Danny Kelly**: **7.30 Nancy Roberts**: **10.00 Mike Allen**: **2.00 - 6.00 Mike Dickin**.

15 Ne3 Bc5
16 Nec3 Ra8
17 Kh2 Nd6
18 Nu7 fxe4
19 Nc6 Qd7
20 g4? Nf6
21 g5 (see diagram) Nfxd5!
22 Nxd5 Nd3+!
23 Bxd3 exd3
24 Nce7+ Kh8
25 Nxc8 e1+
Timman resigns

INDEPENDENT PURSUITS

CHESS

JON SPEELMAN

GARY KASPAROV, the Professional Chess Association (PCA) world champion will tomorrow begin a six-game match against the top Dutchman, Jan Timman, at the Divadlo Archa Theatre, in Prague. They will play the series in bursts of two games with rest days inbetween.

The contest was originally billed

as a warm-up before Kasparov's "tutie defence" against Alexei Shirov.

This was originally due to be held in Spain in October, but it ran into difficulties when the organiser, Luis Rentero Suares, was deprived of half of his funding – a cool one million dollars – following a political row.

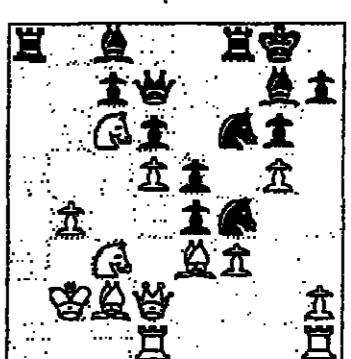
It is rumoured that the Kasparov/Shirov match will now move across the Atlantic; and Kasparov is due to

hold a press conference today to clarify the matter.

From tomorrow onwards, however, he will be turning his attention to Timman, against whom he has the splendid record of 18 wins, 22 draws and three losses, but who will still be a dangerous opponent, at least at the start.

The problem with playing Kasparov is that not only is he a wonderful opening theorist, blistering tactician and fine strategist; even when you get a good position against him, he still has a superlative "swindle mode", or knack for stirring up uncontrollable complications.

I witnessed this game between the two from one of the Linares tournaments and talked to Jan later. He was convinced that he had had a plus. A man of principle, he rightly hit the Black knight with 13.b4 and pressed on with 15.Nb5! But 20.g4 was very risky – 20.Bxe4! would have



kept an edge. In the diagram, the obvious knight sacrifice is extremely dangerous. But 23.Bxd5! was a mistake – 23.Bxd5? was correct with massive complications. The final position was slaughter since if 28.Nf6! or 28.Nc4!.

White: Jan Timman
Black: Gary Kasparov
King's Indian Defence
Linares 1992

1 d4 Nf6
2 c4 g6
3 Nc3 Bg7
4 Kh2 Nd6
5 e4 d6
6 Be3 e5
7 d5 Nh5
8 Qd5 f5
9 0-0-0 Nd7
10 Bd3 Nc5
11 Bc2 a6
12 Ng2 b5
13 b4! Nd7
14 cxb5 axb5

jspeelman@compuserve.com

BRIDGE

ALAN HIRON

Game all; dealer South

| | |
|----------------|------------|
| North | ♦K Q J 9 |
| ♦J 10 8 | ♦J 10 9 4 |
| ♦K 5 | ♦K 5 |
| West | East |
| ♦ 10 6 5 4 3 2 | ♦ A 8 7 |
| ♦ Q 6 3 | ♦ A K 9 2 |
| ♦ 7 3 | ♦ 5 2 |
| ♦ 7 3 | ♦ 10 8 6 2 |

South

♦ none

♦ 7 5 4

♦ A K Q 8 6

♦ A Q J 9 4

return? There was an alternative way out of East's supposed dilemma that is worth noting for future occasions. As the opening lead promised an honour, which had to be queen, East could have returned ♠2 at trick two. This would have made it clear to his partner that East had started with exactly four hearts and West would have been able to see from where the setting trick might come.

West led ♠3 against Five Diamonds and, after winning with his king, East cashed ♠A. Now he had a problem – had his partner led from ♠Q63 or ♠Q63? It was all guesswork now; he thought, and (otherwise there would have been no story) East attempted to cash ♠A. Declarer ruffed and claimed.

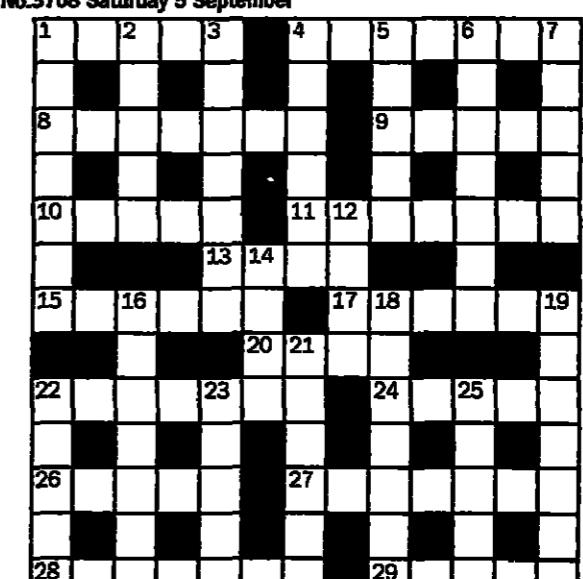
East really was asleep. If the ace of spades was going to live, it was conceivable that all of dummy's spades would go away after a heart

trick.

West had started with exactly four hearts and West would have been able to see from where the setting trick might come.

CONCISE CROSSWORD

No.3708 Saturday 5 September



ACROSS

- Nautical markers (5)
- Row of houses (7)
- Last too long (7)
- Russian house (5)
- Boredom (5)
- Like a lion (?) (7)
- Opinion (4)
- Remained (6)
- Peer (4)
- Member of emergency service (7)
- Mouth (5)
- Cook (5)
- Tonsorial service (7)
- Of the stars (7)
- Flower (5)
- Intermediaries (7)
- Expanse of salt water (5)
- Endure (7)
- Confused mass (6)
- Wild West show (5)
- Sale (7)
- Rub out (5)
- Water-jug (4)
- Notion (4)
- Land area (7)
- Very cold (7)
- Transparent plug (7)
- Mooring implement (6)
- Diverges (5)
- Accommodation for travellers (5)
- Go over main points (5)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:

ACROSS: 1. Fan, 3. Tizzy (Fantasy), 7. Fracture, 8. Ahut, 9. Breakthrough, 10. Egloom, 12. Kismet, 14. Sweet-and-sour, 18. Lira, 19. Brackets, 20. Kinty, 21. Mac. DOWN: 1. Firebox, 2. Naute, 3. Feath, 4. Zealous, 5. Young, 6. Bunkum, 11. Inex-act, 12. Kidnap, 13. Erratic, 15. Whisk, 16. Abbey, 17. Oakum.

REGIONAL TELEVISION VARIATIONS

BBC1

N Ireland 4.45 Final Score 4.55 - 5.00 Northern Ireland Results 5.30 - 5.45 6.00 11.25 Match of the Day 4.25 - 5.00 Match to Survive 4.15 Top of the Pops 2.45 - 7.30 BBC News 24 Scotland 5.30 - 5.35 Reporting Scotland

Wales 4.45 Final Score 4.55 - 5.20 Wales on Saturday 5.30 Wales on Sunday 6.00 - 6.05 Carbon Central

BBC2

Wales 7.30 Euro 2000 Wales v Italy 8.45 Whatever Happened to the Llyw Llysiau 10.55 Birmingham and Teacake 11.30 Gaytime TV 12.30 Cricket - NatWest Trophy Final 1.00 Film: *The Testament of Dr Mabuse* 3.00 Close

Amelia

As LWT except: 12.30 The Making of Her Rain (1987), 1.35 Angie News

(7547327), 1.45 International Motor

Racing (561722), 2.40 The Roadshow

(496940), 3.30 Eurosport 1, 4.05 TimeCop (5682269), 5.00 The Age of Sport (576745), 12.30 Film: With Hosts Michael Caine and Mel Giedroyc team up to combat sexism on the Long Beach force.

Melissa is hounded by fellow patrol car cop Peter O'Hare while Mel is taunted by colleagues in the K-9 corps. A true story that's about as gripping as a soap opera, but it's not bad. *Not Fade Away* (707815), 5.00 ITV Nightscreen (53728).

HTV West

As HTV Wales except: 4.45 HTV West News and Weather (561722), 5.00 HTV Wales Results (561722), 7.30 HTV News and Weather (561722), 12.30 HTV Wales

YOUR MONEY

PERSONAL FINANCE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

HOW TO MAKE IT • HOW TO SPEND IT

Go back
to school
in style

PAGE 6

Put yourself
in Ronaldo's
boots

PAGE 8

The A-class:
triumph or
turkey?

PAGE 9

Today's private eye is more likely to be pursuing a bloke with a dodgy back than a blonde with a penchant for murder. By Paul Slade

Sickies, lies, videos and tapes

Hollywood's idea of a private detective is a lone trench-coated figure, swathed in cigarette smoke, trudging the city's mean streets on behalf of a beautiful, but deadly, blonde.

Britain's real-life private eyes do tend to work alone, and may prefer to stick to the shadows when working, but there's the resemblance to Philip Marlowe or Mike Hammer ends. The client is more likely to be one of the UK's big insurers than a *femme fatale*, and the person they are watching could be you.

Private investigators are the insurers' last line of defence in combating fraudulent claims, and one of the main areas where they work is permanent health insurance (PHI). This insurance will typically pay about 75 per cent of your income if you are unable to work through illness or accident. But the temptation is for dishonest claimants to continue tak-

do PHI quotes for individuals, we show the total amount of money we may be liable for, and in some cases that's over £1m. If you are only 25-years-old, you've got 40 years' earnings in front of you and that could be a lot of money."

Marcus Makin, income replacement claims manager at Norwich Union Healthcare, says: "In the old days, we would get a medical certificate and we'd pay a claim. But now, because of the size of the benefits, and because fraud has increased over the past few years, investigations are more common."

Industry figures suggest about 9 per cent of PHI claims covered by the policy are proved to be fraudulent. Mr Makin says his own company sends private investigators after about 100 PHI claimants every year.

In practice, this means the investigator will shadow the claimant for a few days, searching for evidence that he is working when he claims not to be, or for signs that the injury involved has miraculously cleared up.

One Devon-based investigator, who asked not to be named, says: "We spend time watching them with video cameras or still cameras at the weekend. It might be a case of us bowing up to the local 'lads and dads' football match at the weekend. Or somebody across the road may be happy to let us use their garage or their upstairs room to carry out the surveillance.

"We find people playing football, or putting a new engine in the car, when they're supposed to have a bad back."

Mr Makin believes many claimants fall into PHI fraud almost by accident. He says: "Take a self-employed guy, who claims because he has genuinely been ill.

"He may go back to work a couple of days a week, doesn't get around to letting his insurance company know, and gets used to the extra money coming in."

There are several things that may prompt an insurer to use private investigators on a claim. It may be a telephone tip-off from someone who has overheard the fraudster boasting in the pub, which starts the ball rolling. But this would not be sufficient cause on its own. More often, there is something in the case which simply does not add up.

Mr Smith at Unum, says: "One doctor's view may be that the person is perfectly capable of doing their job,



If you're fraudulently claiming disability insurance, someone may be watching you Neville Elder

ing the insurer's monthly cheques long after returning to work.

One PHI insurer has just closed down a claim from a policyholder, who said he was unable to work because of a bowel disorder which - had it been genuine - would have left him spending most of his day on the toilet. A few days' surveillance by a hired private eye revealed that the claimant had actually returned to his business of renovating and selling houses. This gave the company the evidence it needed to stop his payments.

This can be a very lucrative area for fraudsters. PHI contracts will continue paying out until the claimant is able to return to supporting himself. That means the cheques could keep coming in, all the way to retirement age.

Andrew Smith, a spokesman for PHI insurer Unum, says: "When we

while another says he may be lying in bed till he is 65. That inconsistency could prompt the use of a private detective. If a policy were taken out, and a claim occurred immediately, that would raise suspicions too."

Although insurers are entitled to recover any unjustified payments they have already made, this is seldom possible in practice. Almost always, the money has already been spent. Mr Smith says: "We would reserve the right to reclaim any money already paid out, but in reality that does not happen very often."

Mr Makin agrees, saying: "In a lot of cases, it's a large amount and people simply don't have it."

"At the end of the day we don't want to go round bankrupting people or taking their houses. We're quite happy for

it to be money that we're not paying out any more."

However professional the investigator, there is inevitably something a little squishy about the process of spying on people. PHI insurers insist that they vet the detectives they use carefully to ensure they behave well. But our Devon sleuth confirmed that some of his colleagues have been known to pull strokes of their own.

He says: "Some of my colleagues may have carried out tricks in the past, such as puncturing a claimant's car tyre, or letting the air out. Then they bend their backs to change the tyre and you can get the photograph of them bending when they say they can't. That does happen."

At the moment there is no need to get a licence to set yourself up as a

private investigator, and only a voluntary code of practice to govern how you behave. The Government plans a White Paper on tighter control of the private security industry, which may include private investigators, later this year.

Insurers justify their use of private eyes by saying it is an essential part of the fight against fraud. Fraudulent insurance claims in the UK rose by £35m to reach £555m in 1996, and it is the honest policyholders who end up having to pay the price in the form of higher premiums.

"What we're doing, at the end of the day, is protecting our customers," says NU Healthcare's Marcus Makin. "I think we are justified in using investigators because we only use them as a very last resort."

THE TRICKS THEY PULL...

- Rescue services mount a major search to find the body of a man said to have fallen off a cliff in Greece. His body is not found. A claim for £50,000 is made on his insurance. The man is later found sitting down to a meal with his wife. He is now serving three years in jail.
- A taxi driver claims £75,000 after suffering whiplash injuries which he says means he is unable to work. He is seen playing golf. The claim is settled out of court.
- A man claims for brain damage from an industrial accident. It is said he cannot make decisions on his own and needs 24-hour care. He is secretly filmed measuring a room for a carpet, discussing its make and colour with his wife, and placing the order. While the home is re-decorated, his wife and children move out for four days, while he remains in the home alone, without care. The claim is settled out of court.
- A policyholder claiming for a back injury from his PHI insurer is found to have gone bungee-jumping while on holiday in Thailand.
- A business man claims a car accident has left him with a back disability so severe that he cannot attend an insurance company's assessment centre in London. His GP also protests that the man cannot travel that far. The man is later discovered to have booked a holiday to Spain.

...AND HOW TO NAIL THEM

A secret document from the PHI Forum, a group of insurers, reveal how far they are willing to go to stop cheats - even where there is no evidence of fraud.

The document says: "Some documents predispose themselves to private investigation. These are diseases that do not have precise medical evidence. We would include ME, RSI, musculo-skeletal [diseases], fibromyalgia, mental illness and stress."

Pretext calls are acceptable, according to the insurers' document, obtained by *The Independent*: "Taping calls is acceptable evidence. The other party does not need to be told that the call is being taped."

Would-be detectives are told to watch out: "If pretext calls are made, remember that the callback service [from] British Telecom may allow the claimant to ascertain who has called."

Nor are all claims fraudulent. William Lyons permanently insured his back while working as a civilian for Durham police. A woman with a secret camera in her bag tricked her way into his house, trying to find evidence of a false claim. It wasn't. Mr Lyons was awarded £45,000 by a court last July.



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INSIDE

Financial makeover
Tracking the trackers
Unit Trusts

2

Brian Tora

3

Back to school - and bed

4

If the boot fits

5

The baby Mercedes

6/7

Life in the chain gang

8

Bargain hunter

9

10

12

HOW DO we know we can trust an independent financial adviser? This was discussed last Saturday on Radio 4's *Money Box* programme, in which I took part.

The programme followed the fortunes of a listener who had tried to obtain financial advice on her own behalf. Despite speaking to nine advisers, most of them independent (one claimed to be, although he worked for an insurance company), the client was none the wiser.

Indeed, she felt she had been let down badly by the main agency, called IFA Promotion, which exists to promote independent advice. IFA Promotion, which fields 80,000 calls a year from consumers, offers them the names and phone numbers of three advisers in their area. But, as Radio 4's "guinea pig" discovered, those named may not be experts in a particular financial subject area.

There is a separate list of specialist advisers, sponsored by *Money Management* magazine. Those on the list are also meant to be fee-charging advisers. However, the Radio 4 listener still found herself being steered towards commission as the preferred method of paying for the advice she was receiving.

Therein lies the nub of the problem. Most advisers are remunerated by means of a commission from the company whose product they sell. How can we trust them not to be influenced by the size of commission they receive from one firm, as compared to another?

While many advisers are honourable people, whose prime motivation is to do the best for their clients, others are not. There are a significant minority who think nothing, for example, of recommending high-commission products – such as regular premium pensions to contract workers – that will seriously disadvantage them by loading the charges in the first few years' contributions.

During the radio discussion, the point was made that if we did away entirely with commissions, then many individuals would simply not be able to afford the £20-£20 hourly rates charged by most fee-based advisers.

I have used both commission and fee-based remuneration to reward my adviser;



NIC CICUTTI

Can we trust advisers not to recommend products that pay them high commissions?

depending on the advantage to me. For example, if one has a very simple end-of-tax-year pension payment to make, that might take only an hour to transact, the choice should be based on the scale of any contribution. As a rough guide, a lump sum premium of more than £2,500 means fees might be more appropriate than commission.

Fees are more transparent though, although one partial solution might be to limit the maximum commission a company is allowed to pay the adviser who sells one of its products – there would be no danger of advisers recommending the highest-paying one.

But the central issue is whether we believe they are competent in the first place. As many advisers admit, the present system means they can get on with selling us what they want after obtaining a basic qualification which is barely higher than an O-Level. Moreover, there is a plethora of additional qualifications which mean any potential client is left completely baffled when they see the framed certificates on an adviser's wall.

The solution would be to have only one awarding body and to toughen up training and basic exams to at least first year university level.

However, it still boils down to that almost indefinable word – trust. A relationship with an adviser should last until you or s/he retires. If you feel uncomfortable with someone or with the quality of their advice, move on before you do each other harm.

Robert and Jane are not untypical of many professionals. The couple have two teenage daughters, Clare, who will be 18 in October, and Bethany who is 16. As they both work hard for their money, Robert and Jane want to ensure that their savings are working equally hard, particularly as they hope to retire early in their mid-fifties. Sensibly, they have decided to take stock of the family finances.

The adviser: Graham Bates is chairman at Bates Investment Services, a national firm of independent financial advisers (tel: 0113-2 955 955 or e-mail info@batesplc.co.uk).



The Hipwells are looking to their daughters' futures as well as their own. *Sean Page/News Team*

Help Clare when she enters university in October next year. Meanwhile, we would certainly recommend maintaining the overpayments for as long as possible. Robert should also maintain his accident, sickness and unemployment cover, as this provides an added security blanket.

Life assurance provides essential financial cover which is particularly important during the early years of family life. However, generally speaking, as the family matures and expenditure reduces, a high level of cover may not be necessary.

Robert and Jane have always maintained term assurance cover on their lives, although this is due to end shortly. We would recommend that an appropriate level of cover is renewed until both Clare and Bethany have completed higher education. It is unlikely that any life assurance protection would be necessary thereafter, particularly as the outcome

despite the fact that transferring the investment to an alternative manager will involve some cost, nevertheless Jane should consider doing just that. On a 10-year view we would recommend Henderson's TR European Growth, an investment trust which has an excellent track record in this sector.

Jane should be aware that this is slightly more risky than her existing PEP but, in our opinion, the long-term growth potential is likely to be superior. Robert should continue the £100 per month contribution he makes to the Fidelity Moneybuilder Index PEP, which has returned 20.64 per cent in the 12 month period to 31 July 1998. In both cases, the monthly contributions can only be maintained until 5 April next year, following which PEP investments will be replaced by the new Individual Savings Account. At that point, independent financial advice

should be sought.

Robert has 225 Halifax shares, which he wisely holds inside a Fidelity PEP wrapper. The recent stock market turmoil has taken its toll on the Halifax share price, but this would not be a good time to sell. It is important to try to think about recent adverse movements in a historical context and to remember the long term benefits of equity investment. A cash "cushion" is one of the most important elements of any financial plan, and Jane puts aside £200 each month as a "rainy day" fund, which is kept on deposit with Cheltenham & Gloucester. However, this represents a sizeable chunk of the monthly savings, and deposit accounts rarely offer the best option for investment over the medium and long term. With this in mind, Jane should consider redirecting a larger proportion of her monthly savings to her PEP.

Flexibility is an important factor, and the Hipwells should be advised to steer clear of fixed-term savings plans, although the existing 10-year plan with RNPFN, together with the various endowment policies, should be maintained through to maturity.

Finally, Robert and Jane are keen to know if their two daughters can improve the outlook for their own nest-eggs: money which has been set aside to give them a good start in life once they leave full-time education. They each have investments with National Savings, maturing between the years 2000 and 2002.

Depending on their individual circumstances and the date of maturity, Clare and Bethany might consider starting their own ISAs, with at least some of the capital directed towards an equity environment with the potential for real growth. £1,500 a piece has also been "squarrelled" away in Sainsbury's Bank.

We suggest switching this to a growth unit trust, providing that no access will be required to the capital for at least five years, and on the basis that a medium-risk approach is acceptable.

A solid fund such as the Save & Prosper Premier UK Equity should provide excellent long-term growth potential. Clare, at 18, can of course take advantage of her own PEP allowance.

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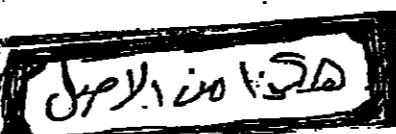
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They were so simple it seemed nothing could go wrong. But can tracking funds survive global stockmarket panic? By Nic Cicutti

Right side of the tracks

Among the many savers having second thoughts in the wake of the world stock-market panic will be hundreds of thousands of people who have piled billions into "tracker funds".

Trackers invest in a basket of equities based on the FTSE 100 index or the broader All-Share index. In essence, trackers are seen as "no-brainers": invest and you will receive the benefits of any rise in the stock-market index they are matched to. Because they don't involve fund managers in massive research, they are generally far cheaper to run than other types of fund. For the past three years, trackers have raced ahead of their more staid managed siblings.

Is this all about to change? Some people believe so. When markets commit collective suicide, tracker funds are first in line to fall – or so it is claimed. Therefore, the argument goes, investors should seek out active fund managers who can seek out ripe investment opportunities in a falling market.

It seems logical. After all, while shares may be falling, some will fall less than others. A tiny proportion will actually rise. Surely a clever fund manager can avoid dogs and select

a few good 'uns? Sadly, the reality is different, at least judging by the evidence of previous stockmarket falls – in 1987, 1990 and 1994.

At the worst point in the October 1987 collapse, the All-Share index dropped 18.84 per cent, while the FTSE 100 fell 20 per cent. This, however, compared with an average 21.53 per cent drop in the UK equity and income unit trust sector in which trackers are classed.

Similarly, in August 1990, in the aftermath of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the All-Share index fell by 10.74 per cent and the FTSE by 7.9 per cent. Yet the UK equity and income sector plummeted by 16.74 per cent on average. Four years later, when the All-Share fell by 6.59 per cent and the FTSE 100 fell by 7.1 per cent, the sector plunged by 12.51 per cent on average.

Yet figures compiled for *The Independent* by HSW, the specialist financial statistics provider, show that all but a handful of top-performing actively managed unit trusts failed to stay ahead of the FTSE 100 and All Share indexes in the 12-month recovery that followed the worst crash, in 1987. At the time, even the best ones went down the tubes.

A similar story applies when comparing the performance of at least one tracker fund, Virgin's, which follows the All Share index. While markets dropped by up to 13 per cent from July 20 to August 24 this year, Virgin's performance, while not the best, comfortably beat the average and was certainly among the better funds in its sector.

What lesson can we conclude from this? In practice, if markets nosedive you will be no better off with most actively managed funds than one of the trackers. So, should you invest in trackers to the exclusion of actively managed funds? And is now the time to invest in a tracker fund, anyway?

Roddy Kohn, an independent financial adviser at Kohn Cougar, based in Bristol, argues: "I would not automatically dismiss trackers. They are a useful way for individuals to gain exposure to the market."

"But, ironically, the wide choice of trackers, the subtle differences between them and the varying charges they apply mean that it still makes sense to at least do your homework before investing in one."

"I also think that trackers should only form one part of a portfolio. It always makes sense to diversify, to reduce risk and maximise potential gains."

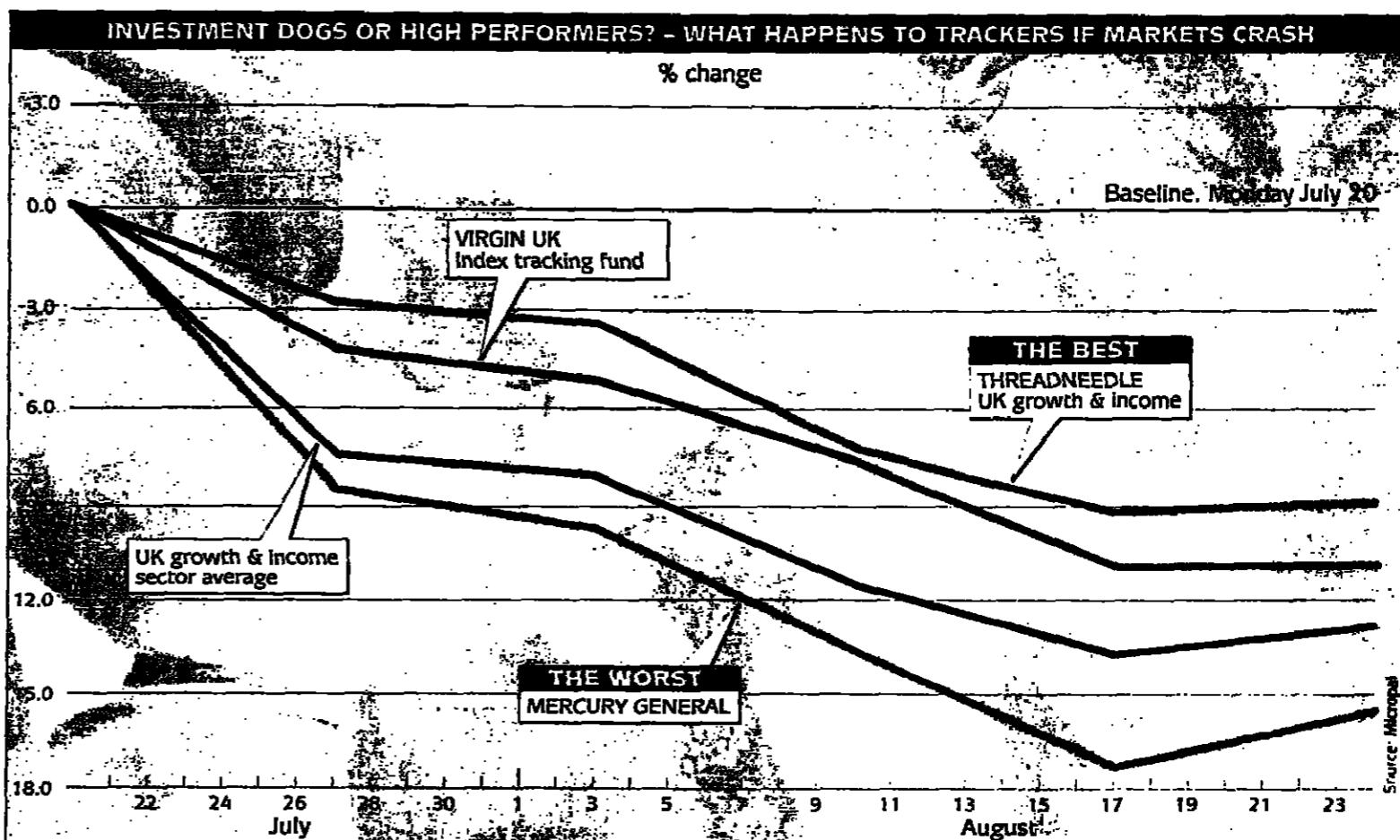
If you believe markets will fall further, you should avoid making large lump sum investments. Instead, place small but regular amounts into a fund of your choice, including trackers, and take advantage of "pound-cost averaging". This means that as shares fall in value, you are buying more of them. In turn, when share prices rise, each one will be worth correspondingly more.

Alternatively, it may pay to diversify into other markets, notably Europe, which many experts believe still has potential for growth.

Remember investment is not for the short-term: if you invested in a tracker as if it were barely more than an instant access bank account with better returns, you have made a mistake. Think in terms of at least five years – 10 if possible – so any "corrections" are given time to head back the right way.

Whatever you do, the starting point is not to be scared off particular investments – particularly trackers – because of unwarranted claims by some fund managers. Being panicked into a fund choice is a near-certain guarantee of serious investment pains.

One major exception should be noted. Anyone investing in a fund tracking the Japanese share index in the past decade would have been bombed to a far greater extent than most managed funds. This is because the Japanese doldrums have lasted years, not months. If the same were to happen here, all bets would be off.



Old rules are still the best to follow

SO IS this the end of the beginning, or merely the middle of the beginning? After the dramatic events in the world stock markets over the last two weeks, it is obviously legitimate to ask whether or not the falls in share prices have yet run their course.

Much hangs on the answer to that question – we have reached the point of decision.

The 20 per cent decline in Wall Street since its peak just two months ago was, as has been argued here before, both inevitable and necessary. The market had reached dangerously high levels that were being driven by late-cycle bull market psychology, rather than by underlying fundamentals.

Really had to – and that has now clearly happened (vindicating at last the anxieties of the Cambridge college investors, about whom I wrote two weeks ago. At least their put option on the market should be well in the money by now).

The last few weeks have also confirmed the validity of some other well-established truths about the world's financial markets: that the proximate cause of the market correction we have seen – in this case the turmoil in Russia – is only the trigger for the more powerful underlying forces at work; and that the tone for all world markets is still largely set by what happens on Wall Street. (Note

the way that even the high flying European markets have tracked Wall Street).

There, the powerful flood of new money into the stock market has not yet dried up, but the "buy on the dips" mentality which characterised the run-up in the markets last year – as mutual fund investors pumped new money back into the market every time it looked like faltering – does seem to have moderated.

All this year, we have seen a clear trend for investors putting more of their money into money market and bond funds,

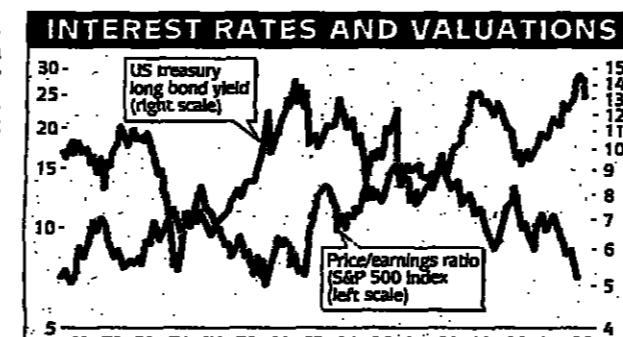
theoretically safer havens. In August, for the first time in some time, some of the bigger mutual fund companies found themselves facing a serious net outflow of funds.

One other piece of market wisdom – which can be summarised as "the higher they rise, the quicker they fall" – has also been amply borne out by recent events. Almost invariably, experience shows that markets fall most sharply immediately after they have risen most sharply.

What is distinctly unusual about this market correction, however, is that it has been so widely predicted. Unlike many previous sharp falls in the stock markets, this one cannot be said to have come out of a clear blue sky. I have lost count of the many reasoned and unanswerable demonstrations of risk inherent in market prices – starting with Alan Greenspan's mutterings about "irrational exuberance" more than 18 months ago.

So where do we go next? The markets, in broad terms, have now given up all of the gains that they have made since the start of this year; but they have not yet fallen back to the levels that first caused Mr Greenspan such concern – which was the level prevailing at the start of 1997. Will they go back all the way to that level?

As usual, this is a judgement



call to which no definitive answer can be given. To the extent that sentiment is still driving the markets, the prospect is not so good. The Russian crisis is clearly a long way from resolution, although its impact in economic terms is nothing like as important as its perceived impact and political resonance. The Russian economy is contracting so fast that it ranks only a minor player.

My guess, for what it is worth, is that the latest crisis, coming on the heels of the much more serious (economically) events in the Far East, will finally be enough to puncture the bull market case. As the world economy starts to slow, as seems to be regarded as inevitable by most pundits, then we will stop hearing so much about the economic miracle in the United States.

Attention will once more focus on the actual profitability of companies, and this in turn will lead to further downgrading in p/e ratios. It is true that the market is still being underpinned by falling interest rates. Long bond yields are now at their lowest level in a generation – nudging 5 per cent – but the driving force is now slowing economic activity rather than a perceived decline in risk. In fact, the evidence from around the world is of a clear flight to quality. Look at how rapidly the risk premia on instruments such as corporate bonds and emerging market debt have widened.

These are still early days, of course, but the market certainly feels like it is ripe for further purging. There is a clear risk – say 40 per cent – that we may yet touch the levels the markets were at 18 months ago. It is hard to give the prospect of a renewed bull market regaining all the lost

ground more than a 20 per cent chance. Something in between, perhaps a sideways drift with continued patches of volatility, seems the most likely.

As ever, the sensible thing to do is keep an eye out for value opportunities, with oil prices and commodities generally in a clear cyclical downturn, the time to find some value in those markets will probably come sooner than it does for the market as a whole. While emerging markets seem intent on regaining their former basket case status, at some point there will be some value to be found there for the risk-seeker. Those who like to follow investment trust discounts will be keeping a close eye on how wide the discounts go.

A bargain is a bargain, whatever the prevailing climate. The time to make the most money in the stock market is when pessimism is at its height and the headlines are full of gloom and doom. The Greater Fool Theory – which guides unwise investors into buying overvalued stocks on the grounds that they will always find someone more unwise to buy it off them – is never so evident as when markets reach the levels they did a year ago.

But my hunch is that the supply of greater fools is now on the wane, and that suggests it would be wrong to expect too much of a rally too soon.

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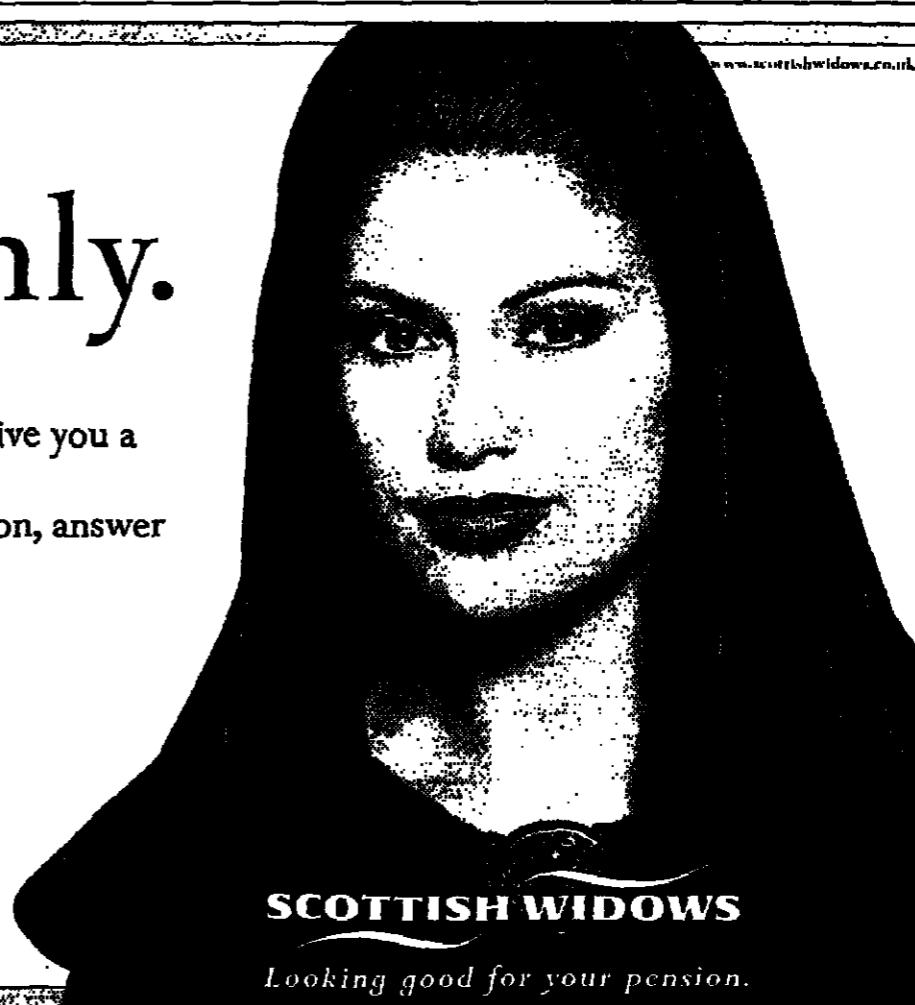
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THE GLADSTONE Library in what was once the National Liberal Club is a magnificent room, its walls decked with books from floor to a giddily lofty ceiling. It was a suitably tenebrous setting for a discourse on global investing, given the present state of markets.

As a curtain-raiser, Capital International, the leading US fund manager, told professional investors present that its planned presentation had been torn up. Worrying, you might think. Actually, it was a remarkably comforting experience.

The rub of its bullish argument was that the Goldilocks scenario in the US remains intact. The thrust of this is that the US is moving into a budget surplus. Treasury bonds, currently in strong demand, could become in short supply if the US government is repaying, rather than creating, government debt.

What is more, American bonds do not look bad value on anything other than historic comparison. Inflation at 1.5 per cent seems in little danger of rising, so the real return is around 3.75 per cent, rather higher than for UK gilts if you assume we suffer a modest risk premium. A buoyant US bond market is likely to do equities no harm.

It is true to say that the US is better insulated against external economic pressure than almost anywhere else. The worry for investment managers is if the American economy turns pear-shaped and we all suffer.

The professionals' view on Russia was also interesting. We all worry about the lack of government, the inability of the authorities to collect tax and the heavy influence of criminal element in the economy.

They pointed out that the most important source of foreign exchange to Russia is oil. Witness what has happened recently. If you take as a broad yardstick an extraction cost of around US\$12 a barrel, the effective profit they are making on this important commodity has dwindled to close to 10 per cent of its previous value. All very frightening.

Add to that the knowledge that other commodities – also falling in value – make up the bulk of Russia's exports, then it seems little wonder the country is in the mess it is. It doesn't



BRIAN TORA
*One thing is sure:
fixed-income
securities look a
safe haven*

help you make money, but at least it explains why things are as tough as they are.

Of course, no investment manager – even one dealing exclusively with professional investors – is interested in talking the market down. Still, I did draw comfort from the reasoned arguments they presented. It may not make me rush into the market, but it certainly helps me from panicking. Who knows, it may even be right to buy emerging markets soon, although there was little comfort to be gained from their view on South-east Asia.

The global marketplace has become a phrase much bandied-about, particularly as the problems in Russia have deepened. The Russian Premier was only being realistic when he said that the clock cannot be turned back. One side-effect of this is the considerable volatility we now have to suffer in markets.

Trying to change the situation artificially – as we see happening in South-east Asia with exchange controls in Malaysia and government intervention in the stock market in Hong Kong – is unlikely to do any good in the long term.

So we approach the autumn with a degree of nervousness – not unbounded but remaining until we have some real evidence that the turmoil in those markets outside Europe and North America is not damaging growth prospects too deeply. At least buyers are emerging on bad days, from which we can take comfort. One thing seems certain though, fixed-income securities, both in the UK and the US, look a safe haven at present.

Brian Tora is chairman of the Great Middleton asset management committee

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APR - Annualised percentage rate

APR - Annualised percentage rate

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MP

Get kitted out for class

The new school year is here, and for parents that means a whole new games ball, not to mention the Quicksilver backpack, the Gant pencil case and all the latest educational equipment. By Debbie Davies



Having the right bag, pencil case or notebook can be a crucial factor in the classroom pecking order

The Autumn school term is just beginning, so it's time to find the letter you received from school at the end of last term asking you to make sure your child was equipped with all sorts when they returned in September. Posh preparatory schools have long asked children to arrive with their own scissors and glue sticks, but state schools are fast catching up. Most try to conserve funds by asking parents to supply a pencil case with pencils, pens, crayons, a ruler, a rubber and a pencil sharpener.

Parents may just see this as adding to the bill. American Express has published research on how much parents spend on back-to-school stuff. Clothing only accounts for a little over half, with the remainder being made up by things like school bags and lots of stationery. But parents have more than financial objections. "I don't know why my son has to have his

own scissors and glue stick for school," says Diana Monk, whose 7-year-old son attends a preparatory school. "He never gets through a term without losing several glue sticks, and can spend most of an art lesson asking to borrow someone else's." By comparison, our own countdown washing up bottles, full of scissors, glue sticks or brushes, become fond recollection.

For children, the stationery race is a chance to mark their place in the class by having the rubber that everyone else wants to borrow. Pencil cases, and their contents, have become the handbags of childhood, in classrooms as far removed from standard issue milk cartons and National Health specs as you and I can imagine.

Choosing what to buy is about balancing the desirable with the practical. Children make no allowances for something that doesn't work, or that falls apart when they've only just bought it. On this basis, rule out pencil tins for

younger children: the contents fall out too easily when dropped.

Advertising slogans on cases are unoriginal, and therefore undesirable. For girls, something that is two parts handbag, one part cuddly toy, is perfect. Gant's pencil cases cost £3.95 from Daisy and

the mail order catalogue, has a sturdy, double-decker wooden pencil box for £5.95. Its layers open out and putting it back together is like fitting a jigsaw.

School bags have just as much credibility hanging on them as pencil cases. Fortunately, this Autumn's

Association (NBPA) found that children who carried bags on both shoulders had a 7 per cent risk of developing back pain, whereas those who carried them on only one shoulder had a 30 per cent risk. On average, children were carrying 17lb, but some were carrying as much as 3 stone.

As a rule, try to limit your child to carrying no more than 10 per cent of his or her body weight. You can help by choosing a bag with padded shoulder straps and back panel. The NBPA launches an ergonomically designed bag in October. Available from school outfitters and nationwide stores such as John Lewis and Tesco (0181 450 0511 for other stockists), it will cost £19.99, and has special lumbar padding so that, when full, it rests on the child's bottom to help take the strain.

Always go for rainproof nylon fabrics: they outlast leather, corduroy or canvas. And it is worth checking stitching before you buy. The point where the top of the back straps are

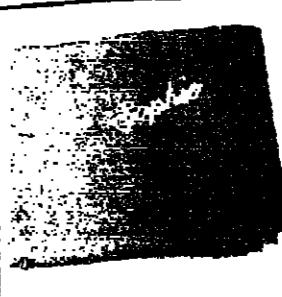
attached to the bag is a real pressure point. If your child is all fingers and thumbs with zips, try a top-loading, drawstring back pack.

There are plenty of back packs that meet practical criteria and have MTV-cool status too. For bags with loads of zippered pockets, mesh compartments, divider panels, straps for helmets, exterior mesh sleeves, quick-release waist belts, bungee cords, water bottle compartments and padded straps and backs, you won't beat Eastpak's bags. Back packs from Quicksilver (0171 836 6352 for stockists) start at £29.40 with larger satchels, priced £46.40 and pencil cases are new this Autumn, priced £9.90.

Whatever you choose, make sure you keep children's enthusiasm for swapping things in mind. You don't want to seem too upset when your son comes home and shows you the friend's secret diary from 1997 that's lost its key that he's swapped for a fountain pen that you just spent a fortune on.

SIX OF THE BEST

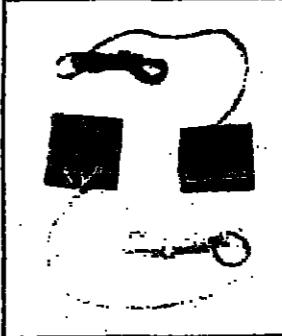
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Lunch pack, £12, by GAP (0800 427789 for stockists)



Small, but perfectly formed, the White Orbit backpack, £19.99, from Eastpak (0800 317466)



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JADE BARBECUE junkies need no longer retreat indoors to spice up their diets. Instead, pep up your food with Cole and Mason's new herb and spice mills. These work by grinding up dried herbs to make them more flavoursome. They cost £2.99 each from Debenhams, Cargos and various independent cookshops (call 01252 522322 for stockists).

SHOP TALK



MAKE THE most of any remaining summer sun this weekend by investing in a luxury chaise longue, £280, from The Heveningham Collection. If it's raining outside, the elegant, hand-crafted iron furniture is equally suited to a life indoors. Designs range from granite- or marble-topped tables through to chairs at £280 and "Versailles" tubs at £245. For those in the trade, the company will be at the Decorex International exhibition (0171 833 3374 for recorded information) in London between 26 and 30 September. The Heveningham Collection (01962 761777) is at East Stoke Farmhouse, Stoke Charity, Winchester, Hampshire, SO21 3PL. **TIM STEIN**

July 1998

SIX OF
THE
BEST
THINGS TO
BACK TO SCHOOL
WITH

Have your handbag
transformed with your
favourite items from
Liberation

And it all ended happily ever after

The success of brothers Alex and Ollie Moss and their iron bed business makes for good bedtime reading By Caroline Donald

Alex Moss has heard all the jokes about making your bed and lying in it: he met his girlfriend Alison when delivering the wrought-iron bed that he and his brother Ollie had made for her; and that is exactly what he and Alison do now. "She liked her bed so much, she asked me to move in," he jokes.

Most people don't go quite that far, handsome chap that he is, but instead send the brothers pictures of their beds *in situ*, complete with contentedly curled up cat on top. "So much of our work comes from word of mouth," they say proudly. "That is a really nice compliment." Indeed, I've been boring all and sundry about the bed the brothers made for me, though I haven't got quite as far as showing round a photograph of it.

I long for weekends so I can pile up the pillows and jump into bed. So elegant are the hand-forged curlicues on both head and base (copied from an old French design and none of your factory-produced blunt ends), that I would never dream of dressing the bed in anything but the best linen.

Poly-cotton is an insult, best kept to the old divan in the spare room.

Judging from the ads in the weekend supplements, iron beds are undergoing a renaissance, moving away from the Victorian brass maid's bedstead look, to something rather more modern. Less cumbersome than a wooden bed, and infinitely more elegant than a divan, wrought ironwork in the house has moved from candlesticks, finials, and the ubiquitous French bakers' shelves, to the bedroom. What amazes me about my Moss Brothers' (it was too confusing for them to

call themselves Moss Bros) is that although I assembled it myself, dropping a large section on my toe in the process, it is still incredibly sturdy. A herd of elephants could give a trampoline display on it, and it still wouldn't wobble.

"People come to our showroom expecting us to be at the lower end of the market because we are cheaper than most," says Ollie. "But then they realise our beds aren't cheaply designed. They come and wiggle the end of the bed on display, but it doesn't move." Another advantage over similarly priced models is that the Mosses' beds have proper bases and mattresses, rather than wooden slats which give far less comfortable support.

One of the reasons the brothers can keep their prices so low is that they do all the welding and marketing themselves. A female schoolfriend of Alex's has recently joined them, but she was away on a deep-sea diving course when I visited the workshop in east London. They have about 10 basic designs, some of which have come about through one-off commissions for customers that have proved popular.

The brothers are happy to make adjustments for no extra charge. There is something very self-aggrandising about making fussy little modifications to make your bed unique, and if a customer wants something very different, then Alex and Ollie are happy to produce a new design for an agreed extra charge.

Their workshop is surrounded by other studios, and a certain amount of cross-pollination goes on: for example, a bed based on a stained-glass window by Charles Rennie Mackintosh has glass detailing provided by the studio two doors down. "People

are surprised by how flexible a material iron is," says Alex. "Wood is much more linear; so has less scope for design."

Rather less aggrandising must be the fact that your own little modifications, such as built-in handcuffs (not mine, I hasten to add) are a frequent request and far from original. One couple wanted a bed that could be wired up, so that glass balls on the end of the bedposts lit up when the vibrations hit a certain intensity, though as far as I could gather, this was not because the house was near a Tube station. Another couple were buying a beach house in Whistable, Kent, and wanted glass bubbles coming through wavy bars on the headboards, and another man wanted increasingly large iron Zs to represent sleep.

Although beds are their main line, with a recent commission for 32 for a development of furnished flats in Old Street, the brothers make other pieces of furniture. Being their own delivery men, as well as

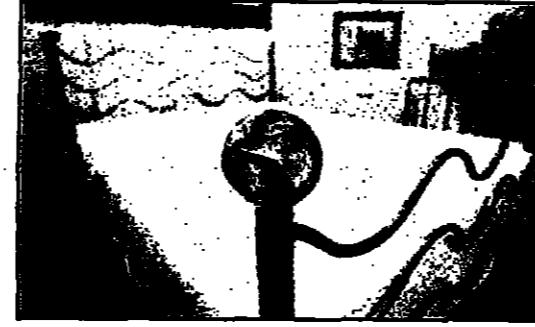
designers, has its advantages. "We go to people's houses," says Ollie. "And when we leave, we've designed the kitchen for them."

It's a far cry from sports pitches and classrooms, which is where Alex spent much of his twenties as a PE and maths teacher before

deciding to join Ollie in business three years ago. Ollie had been to the London College of Furniture, and worked for another designer; but wanted to strike out on his own, to exercise his own ideas. The maths training has proved use-

ful in working out the structural possibilities of furniture design: "We'd waste an awful lot of time messing about if we couldn't do the maths," says Ollie. "It started out with Alex looking after the business side and investing the money, and me doing the welding. But then, last year, we tried to teach others what we were doing. So now, Alex is good at welding and I am still useless on the business side." Nevertheless, they cover for each other when they are away. In their first year of business together, they made 90 beds - last year it was 300 and it looks like even more for this year.

Pictures by Andrew Buurman
Moss Brothers Metal Designs are at 26 Sunbury Workshops, Swanfield Street, London (0171-739 2361)



One couple wanted a bed that could be wired up so that the glass balls on the bedposts lit up when vibrations reached a certain intensity - the Moss Brothers were happy to oblige



Palm trees give that totally tropical taste Martin Rickett

CHECK IT OUT THE TRAFFORD CENTRE

Manchester's ready for trouble at t'mall

IMAGINE GOING shopping and finding that all the hassle has been taken out of the experience. Walking from shop to shop no longer means a survival-of-the-fittest contest along fume-filled streets, the constant journeying to find the shop you're looking for is unnecessary, and getting to a shop at 5.30pm does not mean that the door will be pulled shut in front of you.

This could be you, as they say, if you are one of the thousands of people to grace the marbled floors and palm tree-lined avenues of Manchester's new Trafford Centre.

This Thursday, at 10am, the Trafford Centre will open its doors to shoppers for the first time. Take-up by retailers has been good, with almost all of the sites leased and, as well as shops such as French Connection, The Pier, Oasis, G&P Books, Debenhams and HMV - shops that any self-respecting shopping centre should include under its roof - there are many new faces to the northwest's shopping scene. Popular Japanese retailer, Muji, with its rows of sensibly priced everyday essentials will be there, as will UK newcomer SF Cody, a "shopping emporium" stocking everything from Global Positioning Systems to Karma Sutra love potions.

The centre will also attempt to offer a one-stop leisure experience, and it is estimated that 40 per cent of Trafford Centre business will be conducted after the shops shut their doors for the evening. After a hard

day at the mall, with the children safely left at the on-site creche, what better way to unwind than to enter the "Orient Leisure Dome" and spend the evening in one of the pubs, clubs, bars, restaurants (including the obligatory McDonald's, but also a Rainforest Cafe), bowling alleys, cinemas, or catching the latest bulletin on the Sky Wall?

With all this on offer, it comes as little surprise that interest in the project is high - and not just from local shoppers and job-seekers. Last week, on Thursday alone, Paul O'Farrell, from the publicity company behind the project, had a full day of national media meetings squashed into his already bursting diary. Similarly, there is something to be said for the fact that so many retailers have jumped on board, and for the fact that Selfridges, with the largest store in the complex, has chosen to open its first store outside London here at the centre.

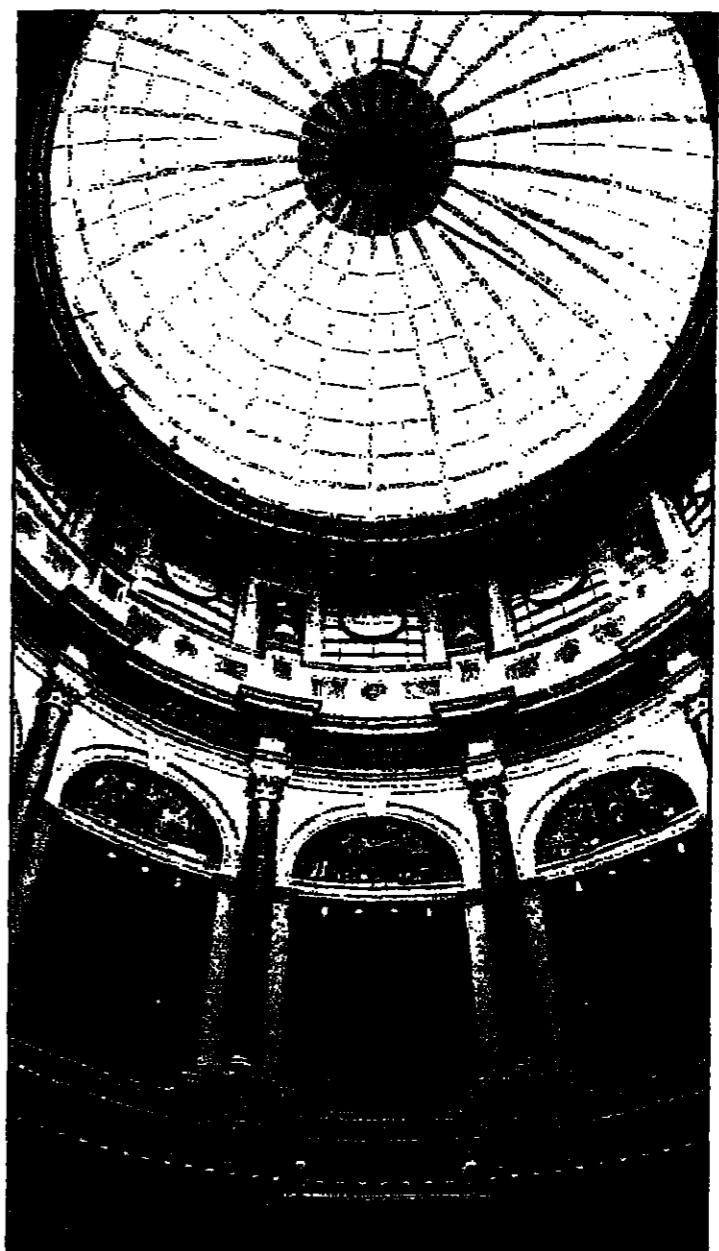
However, the Trafford Centre is not without its critics. There is no question that this is a blaring commercial venture. The fact that this is here to attract the chequebooks and visa cards of the 5.35 million people who live within a 45-minute drive from the centre is sung from the heights of the imitation Greek statues, and the depths of the luminous marble floors. The building of a "£600 million shopping, restaurant and entertainment city" four miles west of Manchester's city centre is without doubt going to have an

impact on many city traders and small local businesses.

We shall have to wait until after Thursday to find out whether Manchester has room for both the Trafford Centre and a vibrant city centre. But this could be the shopping face of the future - glam, glitz, and over the top. Do we want the British shopping experience to be like this? Although the Trafford Centre is not all chainstores, and there are some small local traders taking up stalls in the "Festival Village", wouldn't it be more pleasant to shop in a real street open to the sky? No matter how well planned, there is always something sterile about malls - a certain atmosphere that has you dashing outside to drink in those fumes and stand outside shops that shut their doors at 5.30pm.

The best advice I can give is to go and judge for yourself. Despite the criticisms, there are shops here, like Selfridges and Mui, that Manchester does not have elsewhere.

The Trafford Centre (0845 604461 for recorded information) is situated between junctions nine and ten of the M60. The shops will be open from 10am-8pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, from 10am-9pm on Thursdays and Fridays, and from 9am-7pm on Saturdays, and from 11am-5pm on Sundays. The Orient Leisure Dome will be open until midnight every night, and until 3am on Fridays and Saturdays. REHANNON RATTEN



Greek-style columns grace the architecture Martin Rickett

I WANT TO OWN ... RONALDO'S FOOTBALL BOOTS

If the boot fits, go ahead and wear it

FROM THE silver ghost subtlety of Asics' Italia GELs to the retina-burning Dayglo yellow Valsport Fluoriclass, there's never been so many colourways and styles for football boots. Deciding which pair to buy, though, usually comes down to three factors: do they fit?; which players endorse them?; what make - or "label" - are they?

Footie fans feel they can capture the spirit of their favourite player by simply purchasing the boot he's paid to wear. The kids ogling the blue-tick Valsport? They'll be Chelsea fans, dreaming they're sprinting in Roberto Di Matteo's footsteps.

The manufacturer's name is paramount: the boot you wear is a lifestyle statement, particularly for those in the twilight years of their parklife. The bloke next to me in the queue at Carnaby Street's football mecca Soccer Scene is wearing a loud check suit and telling his mate on the mobile about his purchase: "No, I couldn't get the R-9s [the limited-edition Nike boot worn by Ronaldo for the World Cup sold out months ago]. I've got a fairly gay-looking pair of Nike Air instead..."

If they were such an affront to his manliness, why did he buy them? Because some urges have more to do with advertising than with aesthetics. Sportswear manufacturers have adopted several TV tactics to market their boots. Nike focussed on fun, with the Brazil team larking about in an airport and on a sun-kissed beach. Adidas opted for the monochromatic swerve and stoicism of Beckham and Zidane respectively. Reebok created a parallel universe in which Dennis Bergkamp and Andy Cole find themselves in dead-end jobs, having missed the opportunity of stardom because they hadn't bought the company's gear.

When it comes to the printed

WHO WORE WHAT

1954: The screw-in stud appeared for the first time, in the soles of the Adidas boots of the winning West Germans.
1966: There's only one Geoff Hurst, and like Jesse Owens in the Berlin 1936 Olympics, he spoilt Germany's party wearing German shoes: Adidas again.
1978: Scots' embarrassment is salvaged by one of the World Cup's greatest goals. After a mazy run, Archie Gemmill beats the keeper with a three-striped flash of inspiration.
1986: As everyone looked at The Hand of God, no one saw that Maradona and Peter Shilton had the same Pumas.
1990: Another year, another traumatic exit. Chris Waddle hits it high and wide of the German keeper... and misses. Chrissie is wearing Asics.
1998: David Beckham kicks out with an Adidas Predator. You know what happened next.

ARE YOU A STAR?

IF YOU want to learn to play football like a pro, your best bet is to contact your council for details of your local County Football Association. They can tell you about any soccer schools in your area.

Many professional clubs (including those in the premiership) also run summer schools, and it's certainly worth a phone call to find out.

According to the National Football Association, once you've reached 16, you've left it too late to learn from scratch. However, if you want to have a go, your local association coaching representative can recommend a club that has players of a suitable standard.

Following that, take a leaf out of Pele and Ronaldo's books and jet off to a beach in Rio to try juggling a few oranges between your toes and pick up some tips from the locals.

down the weight of the boot.

It's still significantly heavier than Nike's Mercurial, however, a boot which seems to have been designed with one thought in mind: speed. More like a running shoe than a boot, the Mercurial is so lightweight (at 245g, it's the lightest boot on the market) that you feel you're playing in two pairs of socks rather than boots, which is brilliant for sprinting down the wing but something of a drawback when someone stands on your toe in their clodhoppers.

The Nike seems to have an extra yard of speed and the added bonus of still being regarded as the sports label of the decade, despite recent fluctuations in profit margins. The Predator seems like more of a sturdy all-round boot, and Adidas has the attraction of both hipness and nostalgia. My formative years were spent worshipping the three stripes. My first "label" purchases were a dirty-brown Adidas holdall and two of the classic round-neck, three-stripe Ts. The best boot bargain in the world ever, was a pair of Adidas 2000 I bought half price due to a nick in the uppers. The advert for them in Shoot featured a bad line drawing of then England manager Ron Greenwood. After a period in label wilderness, where my tastes swung from Le Coq Sportif to Converse, I was caught on the crest of Nike's wave in 1990, and I'm still addicted. I must have Ronaldo's boots.

But which colour? Stylish black or the more striking blue and black that Ronaldo plays in for Inter Milan? Before choosing, remember: the more exotic your footwear, the greater the expectation will be for you to do something spectacular in them. As one dad told his son as he drooled over a 24-carat Diadora boot: "But you're rubbish. Get gold boots and people will laugh at you."

SHAWN PHILLIPS

WHICH BOOT?

Perry Conway, Soccer Scene director, suggests six criteria.

K-leather: "At 260 plus, you get a good, soft leather boot. A little more and you get K-leather, giving better feel for the ball."

Blades: "People worry about knee injury, and blades spread the weight of the body much better than studs can."

Good stitching: "The biggest problem is that the upper and sole come apart due to water penetration. Most boots are made in Italy where they don't have as much rain as we do."

Flexibility: "A good boot bends at the forefoot, not the middle."

Ankle support: "Some boots have a closed fit so the ankle doesn't move around. Umbro boots are hard to get on, but once you have, it's like a glove."

Tongue flaps: "Five years ago Mizuno started turning the flap over the tongue. Players loved it as it gives a close fit."



Limited edition: Ronaldo wore Nike R-9s throughout Brazil's World Cup

IF I WIN THE LOTTERY TONIGHT...

ELEANOR MCKENZIE
'REIKI' WRITER



ONE OF the things I've always wanted to do is buy a villa or mansion, somewhere nice and hot - I've got one pinned up at the moment on my fridge, in Cap d'Antibes - and form a community of therapists where people can come for stress relief and a creative break, whatever their income. I imagine not more than 20 people living there, but with accommodation for a small number of people at any time to come and be part of the permanent community.

The environment is important - warm but not too hot. I'd obviously have Reiki therapists, also massage, rebirthing and colour therapy. I'd call in a feng shui expert to create the right atmosphere. Light, air and colour are the most important qualities.

I'd also like to set up a centre, perhaps in an inner city, where complementary therapy and treatment are more affordable. Lottery money could also be used to set up a central information centre and a university foundation to fund research into Reiki and complementary therapy and help medical students study them.

And my friends: I would give them trips on Concorde or round-the-world tickets. I've always wanted to fly on Concorde to New York. I'd also go to Japan, because that's the birthplace of Reiki, for at least three months.

My day job is to work as a writer so winning the lottery would enable me to write whatever I wanted. At the moment I just write health-related material.

I'd live at the therapy centre, but when in London, I'd like to live in Little Venice in a house in a Georgian terrace overlooking the canal.

I would probably carry on playing the lottery. I play occasionally at the moment. I've tried everything, including using a pendulum, to try to predict the numbers. My favourite numbers are my birthday and my son's birthday. You're not supposed to use a pendulum to try to predict the numbers. You ask the pendulum which numbers will come up next week by holding the pendulum over the lottery card and going through each of the numbers in turn. I've given up doing this as I've realised that it doesn't work at all.

Diona Gregory interviewed Eleanor McKenzie, who has a Reiki practice in London. Her book, 'Reiki', is published by Hamlyn at £14.99.

THE ULTIMATE GARDENING KIT

Tame the excesses of summer and create order in your garden by neatly labelling herbs and vegetables. If you don't have a vegetable patch, use them to fool yourself that you will become a real vegetable-growing gardener. Herb markers, £10.50 for eight and vegetable markers, £10.50 for eight, both Bombay Duck (0181 749 7000 for mail order).

Make life easy and buy one of these aluminium Garden Tool Sets in a cotton pouch. Strong and durable, the belt loops let you wear it round your waist so there's no need for boring trips back and forth to the garden shed, especially since there are extra pockets for storage. Kits cost £24.95 from Ocean Home Shopping (0800 132385).

One of the pleasures of gardening is that you can relax after all the hard work and you don't have to feel even a bit guilty. Pamper yourself with the Gardeners Hand Scrub with pumice, £10.50, Gardeners Carrot Soap, £3.50, Gardeners Hand Therapy, £3.95, and Gardeners Skin Soothing Bath Soak, £3.50, all from Crabtree and Evelyn (01385 862244).

Feet need protecting from the weather and from over-enthusiastic garden machinery so, when wellies just won't do, stylish toes can step into these plastic clogs with removable plastic gingham liners. They come in red, blue or green and cost £17.95 per pair from The Traditional Garden Supply Company (0870 600 3366 for mail order).

Look after the emotional side of your garden and prepare for the hardships of winter with a Heart bird house from Shaker (0171 724 7672). For £19.95 you can rest assured that the mornings will remain a chorus of tiny voices - as long as you remember to stock up on bird seed to fill it - and that your garden will continue to look pretty.

Even if the rain is here to stay no self-respecting gardener should miss out a watering can from their tool collection. This Aquae blue metal watering can costs £15 from Habitat (0845 334433 for nearest store) and is essential kit.

Protect your clothes and your green fingers with a strong denim gardener's apron, £28 from RK Alliston (0171 731 8100), and tough leather gloves, £19.95 from the Traditional Garden Supply Company (0870 600 3366 for mail order).

Don't find yourself a seccateur short of a garden tool shed - it is a gardener's job to make sure he has the right equipment for the job. These secateurs cost £10.95 and the dibber, £3.50, both from RK Alliston (0171 731 8100).



Aneville Elder

Round the Benz

The 'affordable' and infamous new Mercedes is put to the test by Roger Bell

Mercedes-Benz's "cheap" new A-class, now on sale in Britain after surviving a launch crisis, is the most radical debutante of the decade. Adventurous in layout and controversial in style, it does not slot into any established category but creates a new one.

At under 12ft long, it has a smaller "footprint" than a Ford Ka. Inside, though, it is almost as roomy as a like-priced Ford Mondeo. The secret to this Tardis-like packaging lies in the position of the under-footwell engine, sandwiched between two floors designed to channel the energy-absorbing power-train harmlessly beneath occupants in the event of a severe head-on collision.

Mercedes-Benz has good reason to stress safety as it was the exposure by a Swedish magazine of potentially dangerous handling that delayed the car's UK launch. The infamous "tilk test" had the original production version overturning. The car's narrow track and lofty build contributed to this instability.

Mercedes' cure cost millions of pounds (and much lost esteem). They modified the suspension and now fit a gizmo called ESP (electronic stability programme), uniting the functions of anti-lock brakes, brake assist and traction control.

It works. I tried hard to uncover any weaknesses in a series of

SPECIFICATIONS

Marque: Mercedes-Benz A160.
Price: from £15,490.
Engine: 1593cc, 8 valves, four cylinders, 102bhp at 5250rpm.
Transmission: five-speed manual, front-wheel drive.
Performance: top speed 112mph, 0-60mph in 11 seconds, 39.2mpg combined.

RIVALS

Audi A3 1.6: From £14,855. Less roomy, but nicer to drive.
BMW 316iS: From £14,570: cheapest BMW lacks sparkle. Badge is big attraction.
Ford Mondeo 1.6 Aspire: £14,495. Bigger, less economical than the A-class.
Renault Scenic 1.6 SR: From £12,995. Roomy, versatile MPV. Good value at keen price.
VW Golf: From £12,735. Fourth generation, well-made, refined. Undercuts Merc.

handling tests at the MIRA proving grounds, but none came to light. In fact, the car impressed with its sure-footed composure when pushed to its cornering and braking limits. It is no sports saloon, the A-class, but it is utterly safe. Scamavita's loose moose have seen to that.

Variations on the five-door A-theme (£14,490 to £17,390 before extras) extend to three trim and equipment packages and three purpose-built engines. The A140 and A160 are peppy four-cylinder petrols; the A170 is a rougher, noisier turbocharged diesel that M-B reckons will account for 30 per cent of UK sales. Of the transmissions on offer (manual, clutchless manual and, coming later, fully automatic) my favourite was the two-pedal manual version.

Inside, behind a bold, shapely

dash, you could be in a mid-range saloon. Although your eye-level is high, the driving position is laid-back. Forward visibility is excellent, that to the rear hampered by upswung rear pillars, the car's most controversial styling feature. Tall adults may feel cramped in the back seats.

Even the A160 feels quite nippy. It strides along with the long-legged gait of a more powerful car. The A180 is quicker, though its power can generate steering lag, hinting that M-B has not mastered the nuances of front-wheel drive at its first attempt.

It's probably the Mercedes-Benz badge rather than the car's innovative design that will attract more buyers than M-B can satisfy. Remedial work has pushed up the price, but the A10 Classic is still £5,000 less than the cheapest traditional Merc.

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It's probably the Mercedes-Benz badge rather than the car's innovative design that will attract more buyers than M-B can satisfy. Remedial work has pushed up the price, but the A10 Classic is still £5,000 less than the cheapest traditional Merc.

Variations on the five-door A-theme (£14,490 to £17,390 before extras) extend to three trim and equipment packages and three purpose-built engines. The A140 and A160 are peppy four-cylinder petrols; the A170 is a rougher, noisier turbocharged diesel that M-B reckons will account for 30 per cent of UK sales. Of the transmissions on offer (manual, clutchless manual and, coming later, fully automatic) my favourite was the two-pedal manual version.

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Tales of woe from the chain gang

Even in a buoyant property market, long delays in buying and selling can cause a shared nightmare.

Penny Jackson spoke to five members of one chain

LIt's bad enough having to rely on the efficiency of your own solicitor and surveyor when moving home; but this is nothing compared to the frustration of waiting for four people down the line to get out. Mr Boggie from Boggs & Boggis stirred into action.

Chains may have been forgotten as the market turned from depression to froth, but they never really went away. Just watch how they can grow in a quiet, more stable market. The following interviewees reveal how it feels to see the weeks and months tick by. In each case, the home that was selected in February of this year was not moved into until last month, and as one exchange date came and went, some thought that they would never move at all.

Mick Meekings was selling a three-bedroom terraced house in Hutton, near Brentwood, Essex, and moving to Herne Bay. His house was on the market with Black Horse Agencies for £30,995.

"I would prefer to be in the Malaysian jungle than move house again. I was 18 when I volunteered to go out to the Far East, and that was a stressful time. I went out with Leslie Thomas on the troupe to Singapore and was one of the lads in his bestseller *The Virgin Soldiers*. But wading through jungle is not as tortuous as all this has been."

"I'm 61 now, and the only way they'll get me out of here is in a wooden overcoat. It was the first time I had moved in 38 years. My wife Susan and I were asked to rush things through because somebody wanted to move by Easter, and I even drove the papers down to Herne Bay myself. Then the murriness fell."

"Although three of us were ready, something went wrong and we couldn't exchange. The weeks went by and we thought, 'Oh God, someone is going to drop out.' We had paid

for a surveyor and we'd already received the solicitor's bill, and when you're a pensioner £500 matters.

"At Black Horse they were holding our hands and kept saying that they'd seen worse and not to worry. But we wanted the house so badly. Susan was getting a bit teary."

"Then, at the end of June, my solicitor rang early one morning to say that four in the chain were ready and she was going to sort it out that day. At 4 o'clock she called to say it was finalised. Susan and I put our arms around each other and cried."

Mr Meekings sold his house to Sylvia Hodd for £20,000. He bought his house from Kirk Pattenden.

Sylvia Hodd had her two-bedroom flat in south London on the market with Kinleigh, Folard & Hayward for £75,000. She was buying with a friend, Jean Veal.

"At one point I got so fed up I organised a phone attack. We weren't supposed to have the names of everyone else's solicitor, but by devious means we found out and started to hassle the one who was holding things up."

"All we knew was that at first there had been a rush to move, and then somebody went on holiday without leaving their solicitor with power of attorney. Then the solicitor was always in court, and so on..."

"We had to move in order to be

'I organised a phone attack. By devious means we found out which solicitor was holding things up and started to hassle them'

closer to a relative who is suffering from multiple sclerosis. As soon as we saw the house we knew that it was the right place for us. We went straight to the agent and made an offer, and the house was taken off the

called we dealt with somebody new.

"We loved the flat and put in an offer straight away for £22,000. We wanted to extend the lease and were prepared to spend £1,500, but the leaseholders wanted £5,000 so we



Home at last: Jean Veal and Sylvia Hodd (top), Frances Gilbert (bottom) and Diane Pattenden (right)

Mike Gunnill

went to the two ladies and they agreed on £70,000. They were wonderful and even made room for some of our furniture. It was still a nightmare, especially as I have a small record label and run the business from home."

Kirk Pattenden and his wife Diane were selling their three-bedroom terraced house in Herne Bay through Wilber & Sons for £39,995.

"You can speak to your daughter in Australia but you can't seem to get two solicitors to communicate with each other. We were given too many hopes early on, and as we had already lost one house, the delay was very worrying. It put an undue strain on the family and work because I run a business from home."

"We never seemed to have enough information, and you begin to feel as if your life is held on a piece of string. In my work, if I fail to call someone back, I don't get the job."

ing to be so reliant on everyone else."

Mr Pattenden sold his house for the asking price to the Meekings. He bought from the Gilberts.

The Gilberts' three-bedroom

saw the large flat in Broadstairs, which was quiet and close to the sea, we thought it would be a good move.

"Then there was a hitch. The flat had been a holiday home, and our solicitor discovered it was leasehold, not freehold. This had to be amended, but the letters to the landlord took weeks. I was beginning to think it was never going to happen. In the middle of it all we were in Spain on a holiday we'd booked ages ago, all the time worrying about the house."

"Then things were held up again. I know other people in the chain were getting upset. You have no idea what to do, though. We never felt we were kept updated by the solicitors."

The Gilberts sold to the Pattenden for £76,500.

THREE TO VIEW

AWAY FROM IT ALL



WALK FARM Cottage at Martlesham, near Ipswich, sits in the middle of 120 acres of woodland, less than a mile from the A12 and from Tesco - but you can't hear a pin drop. The three-bedroom house has been lived in as two properties, so at the moment it has two kitchens; but, subject to planning permission, there's room for extension or rebuilding. There are two reception rooms, a kitchen with a larger, mains water and electricity. It would be possible to live in it while any modernisation is carried out. The cottage is being sold with 11 acres for £200,000 through Brown & Co (01284 725715).



FAR REMOVED from people and traffic is Ellis Green Cottage, reached via a small, unmarked road and then a track, eight miles from Andley End station in Essex. The Grade II-listed thatched cottage stands in just under two acres, with garden, paddock and a modern, weather-boarded studio/garage. The four-bedroom cottage is in need of improvement, but has a dining-room, sitting-room with inglenook fireplace and bread oven. Two staircases lead to the first floor bedrooms, which all have sloping ceilings. If you need company, there's a village pub, the White Hart, in Wimbish. Offers of £250,000 to Trembach Welch (01371 872117).

ROSALIND RUSSELL

STEPPING STONES

ONE COUPLE'S PROPERTY STORY

From mean streets to the Festival city

Executive Iain Fraser has bought four properties since 1986. He now lives in Edinburgh's New Town with his wife Fiona and their two children.

IAIN FRASER first bought in 1986. He was renting a flat on a housing estate in Peckham, south London, but a mugging, and his mother's habit of removing all jewellery before visiting, prompted his decision to move. "I chose Camberwell. It is only two miles down the road, but has a totally different atmosphere."

He bought a two-bedroom basement maisonette with a friend for £56,000 and lived there until he married Fiona. There was a crowd, so Iain sold his share of the flat - then worth £77,000 - and the couple began the search for their first marital home. They wanted two bedrooms, but in Camberwell could afford only a studio flat. So they decided to cast their net wider.

In 1988, it was back to Peckham, this time to a residential street where Iain and Fiona paid £78,000 for a two-bedroom terraced cottage. "We really loved that house," says Fiona. "The area wasn't a problem until we had our first child." Literally. As Fiona was giving birth at home, the police called and asked to be allowed to run through the cottage to get to a "disturbance" behind.

They decided to move, but the property slump intervened. After six months of trying they sold the cottage in 1993 for £64,000 to a couple who knocked on the door having seen the For Sale sign.

The search began for a good-sized family home in a peaceful part of South London. Iain and Fiona focused on East Dulwich, searching long and hard for the right house. A local agent told them of a Victorian semi-detached four-bedroom house in a popular road which he said would "go that day". And it did. Fiona and Iain paid £108,000 for it in 1993.

The four-bedroom home had ample room even after the arrival of their second



Georgian splendour: the Frasers' Edinburgh home

Colin McPherson

child and setting up Fiona's home-based teaching business. But the Frasers had itchy feet - and a problem: "The only places we really liked, Notting Hill or Kensington, were out of our reach." When Iain was offered a job in his native Edinburgh, the family decided to leave London.

Worried about losing friends and being "away from the hub of things", Fiona laid down one condition: "I agreed, as long as we lived in the middle of New Town, where the action is."

In 1997 they sold for £190,000, and, for the same money, bought a four-bedroom Georgian flat "overlooking the waters of Leith". Local agent Simon Rettie of Rettie and Co calls the Frasers' timing extremely prudent. "Prices are still rising, particularly in the centre of Edinburgh where a nearby flat made history by selling for more than £500,000."

After a total redesign by architects, the Frasers' flat is now estimated to be worth around £275,000.

GINETTA VEDRICKAS

If you would like your moves to be featured in Stepping Stones, write to us at Your Money, The Independent, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL.

Boldly building the millennium home

Prepares for Nimby wars. This is the prediction of experts, who warn of serious hostilities as communities, eager to protect their own backyards from the 4.4 million new households that are expected by 2016, insist that yours will be fine.

Crowded cities are bulging at the seams, but suburbs want to remain suburban, villages want to remain villagey, and rural areas argue that, if you tamper with them they stop being rural. In a nation with a rich pastoral tradition and limited land, it is a compelling argument.

The National House Builders Federation (NHBPF) takes that 4.4 million statistic with a pinch of salt: "It represents households, not homes," says David Mote, director of marketing communications. "The starting point in time was 1991, so it covers a 25-year period backdated seven years."

In addition, the NHBPF calculates that, even at 4 million plus, "we need to build up to about 200,000 private and social houses each year in England, or up to 2 million for each of the next few decades".

Mr Mote says: "Compared with 3.5 million homes built in the 1960s and 5 million over the next two decades, the scale of the increase is not particularly dramatic."

Some day Britain will run out of land. And some day the sun will burn itself out. The former will occur a few hundred million years before the latter, but, if you must stock up on tinned food, do it for the year 2000 computer bug, not because the end is nigh. The millennium is upon us, not Armageddon.

Regardless of long-term scenarios, developers always have to contend with limited land, and new developments are now rising in unusual places, all at price brackets. Knight Frank is handling the huge, redundant Cattle Market in Banbury, which, if it receives planning permission, can mean the release of 215

Developers are learning to exploit unusual sites to stop Nimbies going to war. By Robert Liebman

acres in that economically buoyant part of Oxfordshire.

In a different part of the world, economically as well as geographically, Galliard Homes has bought Ministry of Defence living quarters and spruced them up into private homes: 83 in Gwelmor, Cornwall, and 152 in Alver Park, Gosport.

MoD quarters tend to be object lessons in how not to landscape residential estates, but Galliard planted some trees and cut some grass and, earlier this summer, sold the entire Alver Park development in a single weekend. "I won't be modest,"

A waterfront conversion in Barry, south Glamorgan, has the potential to transform this entire Welsh city. A 125-acre site in the derelict docks will be the setting for a mixed-use rejuvenation project including homes, leisure and retail. Part of the land served as a graveyard for old locomotives, many of which ended up in museums across the land. But before they made their final journeys, these quaint coal-burning locomotives leached oil and asbestos into the Barry soil.

Builders are not allowed to build until suspected contaminated land

located to improve Barry's status as a dormitory town for Cardiff.

Site remediation will also be required at Allerton Bywater, the former colliery village east of Leeds in the Aire Valley that is being promoted in a competition by English Partnerships, the Government's regeneration agency.

The colliery and British Coal regional offices closed in 1992. English Partnerships acquired 60 acres and is inviting proposals for a mixed-use development that will feature new residential units designed to be in keeping with the current village and surrounding countryside. The homes must also be energy-efficient, and the overall community must mesh ecologically with the surrounding countryside. This will be a closely watched project, and the futures of many declining English coalfield villages may depend on its success.

Even as Roman bricks and walls are proudly preserved, much newer history literally falls by the wayside. How many people, seeing the new riverside homes and nature reserve in Barnes, west London, will recall the four handsome reservoirs that were the previous occupiers only a few years ago?

Other familiar London landscapes are similarly vanishing. St James is building 300 homes on water filter beds at Long Ditton, Surrey. Berkeley is converting the Thames Water art deco water testing laboratory in Islington, north London, into 41 apartments and duplex penthouses. Berkeley is also building St Dunstan's Gate, at Canterbury West Station, Kent, where flats and houses will rise on former railway sidings.

Railway sidings! When push comes to shove, nothing is sacred.

Barrett 01464 745840; Berkeley (for North London) 0171-337 5226, (for Canterbury) 0227 458474; Galliard 01865 8881; Knight Frank 0171-324 8171; St James 031 755 2345



Thames Water's art deco laboratory in Islington will soon be the height of residential luxury

HOT SPOT BOUNDS GREEN

North London's Edwardian values

EVEN THOUGH he knew the market as well as anyone, property adviser Adam Bourne thought he was taking a gamble when he bought a flat three years ago in Crouch End, north London, for £20,000. However, he sold it recently for over £150,000.

"London is a city of mini-markets in terms of property values, and I've spent years sniffing them out," says Mr Bourne, who believes that he has found another location that looks good for a repeat performance. "The Bounds Green/Bowes Park area is bountiful in choice Edwardian properties with decent gardens – larger gardens than you can find in Crouch End, for example. I tip this area for three years time."

If the name Bounds Green is familiar and Bowes Park isn't, that is probably because the former has an Underground station while the latter is a nondescript area in a non-descript part of north London. Southgate, Palmers Green, Edmonton and Wood Green are neighbouring areas.

"I chose Bounds Green because it is slowly becoming gentrified, has excellent transportation, good civic amenities and the surrounding areas are impoverished. For my purposes, this last point is positive because it will allow gentrification. And there is plenty of expansion



No longer the other side of the tracks. Bounds Green prices are set to soar

room for shops and restaurants," says Mr Bourne.

Joanna Haydon-Knowell who handles Bounds Green from her Muswell Hill estate agency, J-H-K, says: "This area is sandwiched between Bounds Green Road, which is busy, and the North Circular, which is very busy." The area has some nice houses and pretty roads,

says Bourne. "People who cannot afford Muswell Hill look at the area the locals call Ally Pally, which is around Alexandra Park Road. Then they look at Bounds Green. The schools in the Bounds Green/Ally Pally area are quite good."

Ms Haydon-Knowell notes:

"There are two sides to Bounds Green, and prices can drop quite

dramatically on the side of Bounds Green Road that is away from Muswell Hill. And, of course, the closer you get to the North Circular Road, the cheaper the properties become. I am currently selling a tatty double-fronted house on the cheaper side for £210,000. If it were on the other side, I could ask £310,000."

The "wrong" side of Bounds

Emma Boon

Green means that you get more property for your money, or property that is in better condition. It is not too close to the noisy North Circular; there may be nothing wrong with it at all."

Adam Bourne recalls that when he bought his Crouch End flat, "it was considered to be at the wrong end. This area is still Hornsey, and a few years ago people were happy to call it Hornsey, but now they refer to it as Crouch End."

He admits though, that gentrification is not a wholly good thing: "Bounds Green currently has a sense of community, but this will be pillaged by gentrification."

And that's when it will be time to take the money and run again – to a new mini-market.

ROBERT LIEBMAN

Properties and prices: Tony Lucas of Adam Kennedy estate agents notes that the area contains many conversions, with one-bedroom flats starting at £70,000, and large three-bedroom Victorian homes with original features starting at £150,000. "Because of the transportation, this area generally attracts professional couples and families."

Schools: Channing for girls, Highgate for boys, and Norfolk House are the alternatives to the schools run by Enfield and Haringey.

Worst aspect: The North Circular (A406).

Best aspect: The North Circular. All right, it's not really the best aspect, but it is very convenient for a nearby Tesco Superstore and for the M1 and M11.

Brent Cross Shopping Centre and Ikea are also on the North Circular.

Quirky feature: The garden centre that started life as a swimming pool. The Sunshine Garden Centre is on the site of the old outdoor swimming pool (the firm's mailing address is actually The Old Swimming Pool), which was built during that by-gone era when Britain had sunny summers.

Shopping: At the northern end of Bounds Green Road you find the North Circular Road, but at the other end is Wood Green, the location of the huge Shopping City and served by Wood Green underground station (on the Piccadilly Line).

THE LOW-DOWN

Boroughs: Part-Haringey, part-Enfield. The borough boundary runs just north of Bounds Green Road but cuts through the middle of Bowes Park.

Council tax: In Haringey, band A is £570, and band B is £1,712; in Enfield, band A is £453, and band B is £1,360.

Schools: Channing for girls, Highgate for boys, and Norfolk House are the alternatives to the schools run by Enfield and Haringey.

Transport: Bounds Green is on the Piccadilly Line, four stops north of Finsbury Park station, which is an interchange for the Victoria Line and overground rail into Moorgate. The Bowes Park railway station is a short walk from the Underground on a line that also links with Finsbury Park. The area is attractive to City workers.

Parks: There are a gratifyingly large number of small parks to be found dotting the south-east edge of Bounds Green Road, and a few larger ones are nearby. To the south, Alexandra Park is home to Alexandra Palace and a pub with a panoramic view of London. To the north are Arnos Park and, with several lakes and a running track, Broomfield Park. Muswell Hill golf course is also nearby.

Estate Agents: J-H-K, 0181-883 5485; Adam Kennedy, 0181-881 5226; Wilkinson Byrne, 0181-365 5900.

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FINANCIAL DISASTERS OF OUR TIME

THE COLLAPSE OF BARINGS

IT IS difficult for anyone to hear the story of Barings without feeling a wicked twinge of satisfaction at the manner in which Britain's oldest merchant bank was brought to its knees and, just for once, the upper classes got their come-uppance.

Real life is never quite so simple, of course. But the strange "nod-and-a-wink" treatment the chief protagonist in Barings' demise has always

received from the UK press suggests less of a criminal, which he is, and more of a lovable rogue.

On one side is a 28-year-old "lad" from a Watford council estate, Nick Leeson; on the other a bunch of toffs, scions of Eton, Winchester and Oxford.

Leeson joined Barings in March 1992 as a settlement officer - effectively a clerk. By spring 1994 he was dealing in futures and options, sophisticated telephone number-sized bets on the likely direction of financial markets. The trader appeared to have the knack, earning a bonus of £130,000 on his salary of £50,000. According to his superiors' calculations, Leeson had earned them £1m. In fact, by his own calculations, he was already nursing a loss of £23m in a secret account, known as 88888.

As Leeson later wrote: "I was probably the only person in the world to be able to operate on both sides of the balance sheet. It became an addiction."

His addictive behaviour was allowed to continue unchecked by Leeson's superiors, who by late 1994 were regarding him as a star dealer. By then the losses stashed away in account 88888 stood at £208m.

Despite this, Leeson requested and obtained increasing funding to continue his trading activities, as he attempted to extricate himself from the financial mess by more and more frenetic double-or-quit deals. Alarmed, his bosses carried out a spot audit in February 1995 and discovered they were nursing losses to the tune of more than £800m, almost the entire assets of the bank.

Barings crashed and was bought for just £1 by the Dutch insurer ING. Dozens of Barings executives who were implicated in the failure to control Leeson resigned or were sacked.

Leeson was given a six-year jail sentence in Singapore. Recently, it was revealed he was suffering from cancer of the bowel. Despite his criminal activities, there will be many in the UK wishing him a speedy recovery, not least because it can truly be said of him: he is the one who broke the bank.

NIC CICUTTI

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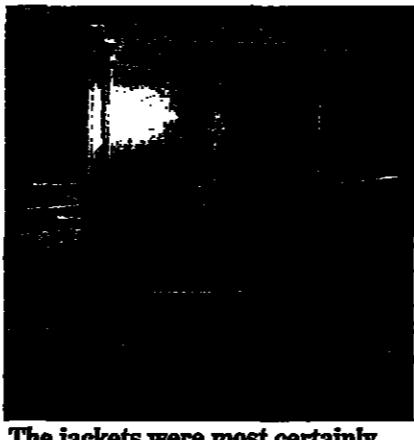
Former Hong Kong stockbroker Leonie Lee-Whittle, 28, is the proprietor of Snap Dragon, a London shop that imports a range of stunning Chinese furniture and objects.

BEST

Leonie was inspired to give up her stockbroking job when she bought a very beautiful 18th-century Chinese wedding cabinet for £2,000 in 1990. "This was the first piece of furniture I bought for myself," she explains. "I was inspired by its beautiful proportions, its simplicity and its patina. It was very important for me in learning how to appreciate the quality of a piece."

In fact, Leonie fell so in love with her cabinet that she spent the next year investigating the possibility of setting up an export business. She travelled around China building up contacts, buying stock and getting to know families who now buy on her behalf. "I was young, and the worst-case scenario I could think of was that I would be left with a container load of amazing wedding presents. As it turns out, the business grew faster than I could ever have dreamed."

Initially Leonie spent five months of every year buying in China, but the desire to have a direct link with her customers led her to set up her London



The jackets were most certainly ghastly, but the furniture turned out to be fab

shop. She remains enthusiastic about her stock: "I am completely obsessed. There is not a single piece of furniture in my shop that I don't love."

WORST

Although her own home is wall-to-wall Chinese, with "lots of wood and bamboo", Leonie wanted her customers to be attracted to the minimalist purity of line which characterises her stock, and so her shop is quite different to her

home. However, she confesses, there was a day when she completely lost her sense of judgment. "Someone said to me: 'Oh, wouldn't it be nice if you all wore button-up Mao jackets?' I went and spent a fortune in a shop in Hong Kong. I got completely carried away and bought two to three outfits for everyone, and spent £200." These "cheesy" Chinese costumes were made of rough silk and came in garish colours. "As soon as I got on the plane to come back to London, I thought: What am I doing? This is ridiculous. The one thing I had wanted was to get away from the archetypal Chinese element, the stereotype that goes through people's heads. I thought: Do you really want people to come in the shop and see people swaggering around in Mao jackets? No."

Leonie has always been a compulsive collector and hoarder and when she lived in Hong Kong she used to gather old chicken hatches to turn into cupboards. The Mao jackets and "fuzzy" trousers remain stuck away in storage, still wrapped in tissue paper, gathering dust. Leonie offers: "If anyone wants them, they are up for grabs."

Snap Dragon is at 247 Fulham Road, Chelsea, London SW3 0171-376 8889.

INTERVIEW: KATE MIKHAIL

BARGAIN HUNTER

PROPERTY OF THE WEEK
Weekend starts here



WITH A modest £20,000 spent on it, the delightful Lion Cottage in Horley, three miles from Banbury in Oxfordshire, would make the perfect weekend retreat. Quite small, with no room for extending, the two-bedroom cottage needs a new bathroom and kitchen. When the estate agent looked in the kitchen cupboards, the tins were still marked with prices in shillings. Although the kitchen is tiny, the sitting room is 14ft 2ins by 13ft 9ins, and the main bedroom upstairs is about the same size. There is no TV point, but it does have mains water, electricity and drainage. The 40ft garden overlooks the grounds of Horley Manor at the back. The village has a 12th-century church, cricket club and pub. Guide price £25,000 through Lane Fox (01255 275592).

ROSALIND RUSSELL

DEAL OF THE WEEK

Drastic plastic

HUNDREDS OF thousands of people will happily stash vast sums each month into savings plans - though they owe a small fortune on their credit cards. The interest they pay will generally be far greater than what the investment earns them.

Which is why cheap credit cards make sense. This week RBS Advanta announced that it is extending its 7.9 per cent APR interest rate until July 1999. The rate applies to the issuer's standard, gold and platinum cards. RBS Advanta claims that anyone with one of its cards and debt of £1,000 would save £124 a year compared to a Barclaycard. The catch? After July next year, the rate reverts to 17.9 per cent APR. But that's still below Barclaycard's present 22.9 per cent APR rate. This is one for debt transfers. Call 0800 07770.

NIC CICUTTI

CAR OF THE WEEK

Dream machine

WHICH CAR symbolised the mad, bad Eighties? Was it the yuppie wagon BMW 3-series, or maybe the sloaney Golf GTI? Neither. If any vehicle symbolised the flash, look-at-me era, it was the Lamborghini Countach, conspicuous consumption on alloy wheels.

Guaranteed to be the centre of attention when the driver's door pivoted upwards, passers-by couldn't miss the 747-sized rear wing either. On the move, it was just as imposing with a massive five-litre V12 engine powering this supercar to speeds approaching 180mph. No wonder people were paying £190,000 for them in 1988. Most still want £90,000 today. Prestige and Performance Cars Limited believe they have the cheapest right-hand drive example in the country. At £36,995 it is cheap at the price. Call 01895 255222.

JAMES RUPPERT

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